

SSC BANKING MANTHAN

Current Affairs Supplement

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Preface

Dear Readers,

The “Current Affairs” section is an integral part of any examination. This edition of Manthan has been developed by our team to help you cover all the important events of the month for the upcoming exams like Banking, Insurance, CLAT, MBA etc. This comprehensive bulletin will help you prepare the section in a vivid manner. We hope that our sincere efforts will serve you in a better way to fulfil aspirations.

Happy Reading!

Best Wishes

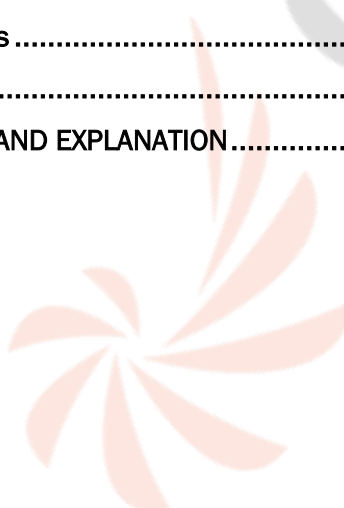
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CONTENTS

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE	4
National.....	4
International.....	40
ECONOMY AND FINANCE	54
Economy News	54
Banks in News.....	61
Firms in News.....	65
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	70
Inventions/Discoveries/Health	79
ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT	84
SPORTS	85
Sports Personalities in News.....	85
Sport Events.....	90
Awards	92
Persons in News	98
Obituaries	102
Miscellaneous	103
Important Days	108
QUESTIONS	113
ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION	139



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POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

National



Centre forms panel to revisit ₹8 lakh income limit for EWS quota

- The Centre has formed a three-member committee to review the ₹8 lakh annual income limit to identify economically weaker section (EWS) for providing 10% quota in public jobs and educational institutions, the social justice and empowerment ministry said in an official memorandum.
- The Centre informed the Supreme Court that it had taken a “considered decision” to revisit the “criteria” for determining EWS to provide them reservation. The submissions came following repeated grilling by the top court over the last two months as regards to the methodology adopted by the Centre in fixing the income criteria for EWS uniformly across the country.
- “In accordance with the commitment given to the Supreme Court to revisit the criteria for determining the economically weaker sections in terms of the provisions of the explanation to Article 15 of the Constitution, the Government hereby constituted a committee” the ministry said in the memorandum.
- The ministry said that the committee will re-visit the criterion in determining EWS category keeping in view the observations of the Supreme Court. “It will also examine various approaches so far followed in the country for identifying economically weaker sections, and recommend criteria that may be adopted for identifying EWS category in future,” it said. The 10% EWS quota was introduced under the 103rd Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2019 which is under challenge before a five-judge Constitution bench of the Supreme Court.
- Since the Act has not been stayed by the apex court, the government issued a notification on July 29 introducing 10% EWS quota along with 27% quota for OBC within AIQ seats for postgraduate medical courses from this academic year. By this decision, 2,500 PG seats in government medical colleges would go to OBCs and 1,000 to those from EWS.
- This decision was challenged in a clutch of petitions that came up for hearing. The income criterion of ₹8 lakh fixed by the Centre was one of the grounds taken by the petitioners to question the July 29 decision.

The One Hundred and Third Amendment of the Constitution of India, officially known as the Constitution (One Hundred and Third Amendment) Act, 2019, introduces 10% reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) of society for admission to Central Government-run educational institutions and private educational institutions (except for minority educational institutions), and for employment in Central Government jobs. The Amendment does not make such reservations mandatory in State Government-run educational institutions or State Government jobs. However, some states have chosen to implement the 10% reservation for economically weaker sections. Currently, the quota can be availed by persons with an annual gross household income of up to Rs. 8 lakh. Families that own over 5 acres of agricultural land, a house over 1,000 square feet, a plot of over 100-yards in a notified municipal area or over a 200-yards plot in a non-notified municipal area cannot avail the reservation. Persons belonging to communities that already have reservations such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and the “creamy layer” of Other Backward Classes are also not eligible for reservation under this quota.

NITI Aayog releases report on Online Dispute Resolution policy for speedy access to justice

- NITI Aayog has pushed for Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) for speedy access to justice. NITI Aayog released the report ‘Designing the Future of Dispute Resolution: the ODR Policy Plan for India’, to scale dispute avoidance, containment, and resolution online.
- It said, the rollout of the recommendations in the report can help make India a world leader in using technology and innovation through ODR, for effective access to justice for every individual. The report is a culmination of the action plan made by a committee constituted at the peak of the Covid crisis by NITI Aayog on ODR in 2020 and chaired by Supreme Court Justice A K Sikri.
- ODR is aimed at resolving disputes outside of the court system through arbitration, mediation, and negotiation. “ODR can help reduce the burden on the court and efficiently resolve these categories of cases. It can be integrated to support the judiciary through technology integration in court-annexed ADR centres and introduced within Government departments for its internal disputes, as well as through e-Lok Adalats,” wrote Sekri in the foreword of the report.
- In 2017-18, the expenditure incurred by the central government in contesting cases in the Supreme Court alone was Rs. 47.99 crore. The report cited the Legal Information Management and Briefing System portal and added as of September 23, 2020, the government had 5,80,132 cases pending in different courts across the country.

The National Institution for Transforming India, also called NITI Aayog, was formed via a resolution of the Union Cabinet on January 1, 2015. It was established to replace the Planning Commission which followed a top-down model. The Planning Commission was an institution in the Government of India, which formulated India’s Five-Year Plans, among other functions. After India achieved independence, a formal model of planning was adopted, and accordingly the Planning Commission, reporting directly to the Prime Minister of India, was established on 15 March 1950, with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru as the Chairman. Authority for creation of the Planning Commission was not derived from the Constitution of India or statute; it is an arm of the Central Government of India. The first Five-Year Plan was launched in 1951, focusing mainly on development of the agricultural sector. NITI Aayog is the premier policy ‘Think Tank’ of the Government of India, providing both directional and policy inputs. The current chairman of NITI Aayog is Shri Narendra Modi, current Vice Chairman is Dr. Rajiv Kumar and the current Chief Executive Officer is Shri Amitabh Kant.

Varanasi became the first Indian city to start ropeway service as a mode of public transport

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s constituency Varanasi has become the first Indian city to start ropeway service as a mode of public transport. The proposed ropeway will be constructed between Cantt Railway Station (Varanasi Junction) to Church Square (Godauliya) to ease the traffic congestion.
- Its outlay is over Rs 400 crore which is divided between Central Government and State Government at 80:20. India will be the third country in the world after Bolivia and Mexico to use a ropeway for public transport.

Jal Shakti Minister launches River Cities Alliance and National Urban River Management Plan for Kanpur

- Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat launched River Cities Alliance and National Urban River Management Plan for Kanpur in New Delhi.
- Mr. Shekhawat said, the alliance is for clean and preserving rivers across India and its core motto is to improve rivers and cities together. Thirty major cities across the country joined hands to transform river’s life in their cities. He said, although we have many resources but cannot be preserved until people connect with it and we need to make it a people’s movement.

Ministry of Jal Shakti (‘water power/capabilities’) is a ministry under Government of India which was formed in May 2019 under the second Modi ministry. This was formed by merging of two ministries; Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation and Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat is from Rajasthan who is currently serving as Union Cabinet Minister in Ministry of Jal Shakti. He is a member of parliament from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) representing Jodhpur in the Lok Sabha.

Centre clears eight hydroelectric projects in Indus basin

- The Centre has cleared eight hydroelectric projects in the Indus basin. Out of the eight projects cleared, Seven are in Ladakh and one in Jammu & Kashmir. The centre has cleared seven projects with a capacity of 140 Megawatts at an estimated cost of 2072 crore rupees in Durbuk Shyok, Sankoo, Nimmu Chilling, Rongdo, Mangdum Sangra, Hunderman Kargil and Tamasha in Ladakh.
- All the hydroelectric projects in Ladakh are with no irrigation benefits. However, Ratan Nag project in Kishtwar district of J&K with 10.50 MW at an estimated cost of over 315 crore rupees has irrigation benefits as well.

Hydroelectric power, also called hydropower, electricity produced from generators driven by turbines that convert the potential energy of falling or fast-flowing water into mechanical energy. In the generation of hydroelectric power, water is collected or stored at a higher elevation and led downward through large pipes or tunnels (penstocks) to a lower elevation; the difference in these two elevations is known as the head. At the end of its passage down the pipes, the falling water causes turbines to rotate.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated InFinity Forum

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated InFinity Forum, a thought leadership Forum on FinTech, on the 3rd of December via video conferencing. The event is being hosted by International Financial Services Centres Authority under the aegis of Government of India in collaboration with GIFT City and Bloomberg.
- Indonesia, South Africa and the U.K. are partner countries in the first edition of the Forum. InFinity Forum brings together leading minds of the world in policy, business, and technology. They discussed and come up with actionable insight into how technology and innovation can be leveraged by the FinTech industry for inclusive growth and serving humanity at large.
- The agenda of the Forum will focus on the theme of ‘Beyond’. The sub-themes include FinTech beyond boundaries, FinTech beyond Finance, and FinTech Beyond Next, with a focus on how Quantum Computing could impact the nature of the Fintech industry in the future and promote new opportunities.
- NITI (National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog, Invest India, FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry) and NASSCOM (National Association of Software and Service Companies) are some of the key partners of 2021’s Forum.

Indian Railways Jiriram-Imphal Line: World’s tallest railway bridge pier coming up in Manipur

- Indian Railways has constructed the world’s tallest railway bridge pier at Noney Valley in the state of Manipur with a height of 141 metres. As a part of the ambitious 111 Kilometre long Jiribam-Imphal railway line, which aims to connect the capital of Manipur with the broad gauge network of the country, the travel time of 10 to 12 hours will be reduced to just 2.5 hours.
- The bridge at Noney Valley, which is being developed at a pier height of 141 metres, will surpass the Mala – Rijeka viaduct’s existing record of 139 meters, located in Montenegro, Europe. The distance between Jiribam and Imphal (NH-37), At present, is 220 kilometres, which takes about 10 to 12 hours of travelling. Once the construction is completed, the bridge crossing Noney valley will become the highest pier bridge in the world.

Indian Railways (IR) is the fourth-largest railway network in the world by size. There are a total of 18 Railway zones. South Coast Railway Zone is the newest and 18th railway zone, headquartered at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Ashwini Vaishnaw is currently serving as the Minister of Railways and Commerce in the Government of India. He was elected as the BJP candidate from Maharashtra for the Rajya Sabha on 3 June 2016. The practice of a separate Railway Budget was started by the British in 1924 under the recommendation of a 10-member Acworth Committee headed by British economist William Mitchell Acworth in 1920-21. On 21 September 2016, Government of India approved the merger of the Railway Budget with the Union budget of India, and thus came to end – a 92-year-old practice of separate rail and general budgets.

India joins G20 ‘Troika’ with Indonesia and Italy; to assume G20 Presidency in December

- **India has joined the G20 Troika.** Apart from India, Troika consists of Indonesia and Italy. India will assume the G20 Presidency in December 2022 from Indonesia and will convene the G20 Leaders’ Summit for the first time in the country in 2023. India will work closely with Indonesia and Italy to ensure consistency and continuity of the G20’s agenda as a Troika member.
- **Indonesia has assumed the G20 Presidency** and will convene various G20 meetings throughout the year culminating with the G20 Leaders’ Summit in October next year under the overall theme of ‘Recover Together Recover Stronger’. The G20 is a premier forum for international economic cooperation. As a founding member of the G20, India has used the platform to raise issues of vital importance.

The G20 (or Group of Twenty) is an international forum for the governments and central bank governors from 19 countries and the European Union (EU). Founded in 1999 with the aim to discuss policy pertaining to the promotion of international financial stability, the G20 has expanded its agenda since 2008 and heads of government or heads of state, as well as finance ministers, foreign ministers and think tanks, have periodically conferred at summits ever since. It seeks to address issues that go beyond the responsibilities of any single nation. The G20 members are: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, India, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union.

Amid din in Lok Sabha, Rijiju introduces Judges Bill

- **The Lok Sabha introduced a bill which seeks to bring clarity on when Supreme Court and high court judges are entitled to an additional quantum of pension or family pension on attaining a certain age.**
- **The High Court and Supreme Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Amendment Bill, 2021,** which was introduced by Law Minister Kiren Rijiju amid din by opposition over farmers’ issues, proposes to amend the High Court Judges (Salaries and Condition of Service) Act and the Supreme Court Judges (Salaries and Condition of Service) Act.
- According to the bill, in 2009 the two laws were amended to provide that every retired judge or after his death, the family, as the case may be, will be entitled to an additional quantum of pension or family pension. Accordingly, the additional quantum of pension to retired judges of the high courts and the Supreme Court is being sanctioned on completing the age of 80 years, 85 years, 90 years, 95 years and 100 years, as the case may be.
- However, in a writ petition filed by a retired high court judge Virendra Dutt Gyani, the Gauhati High Court in its order of March 15, 2018 had held that benefit of additional quantum of pension as per the High Court Judges Act in the first slab would be available to a retired Judge from the first day of his 80th year.

The Supreme Court of India came into being on 28 January 1950. It replaced both the Federal Court of India and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council which were then at the apex of the Indian court system. The first Chief Justice of India was Sir H J Kania. Originally, the Constitution of India envisaged a supreme court with a chief justice and seven judges; leaving it to parliament to increase this number. At present, SC is consisting of the Chief Justice of India and 33 sanctioned other judges. The motto of the Supreme Court is ‘Yato Dharmastato Jayah’, means “whence law (dharma), thence victory”. It is also referred to – as the wheel of righteousness, encompassing truth, goodness and equity. As per the Article 142 of the Constitution, it is the duty of the President of India to enforce the decrees of the Supreme Court and the court is conferred with the inherent jurisdiction to pass any order deemed necessary in the interest of justice. The Supreme Court has replaced the British Privy Council as the highest court of appeal.

India and EU agrees to set up Clean Energy and Climate Partnership

- **India and European Union (EU) have agreed to step up their Clean Energy and Climate Partnership.** They jointly agreed on a detailed work programme until 2023 to implement the 2016 India-EU Clean Energy and Climate Partnership.

- **The Panel agreed on increased technical cooperation in energy efficiency**, renewable energy, green hydrogen, grid integration, storage, power market design, interconnection, cold chain, and sustainable financing. **The Panel also agreed to explore further avenues to strengthen India-EU cooperation within the context of the International Solar Alliance.** EU expressed its support for the close cooperation between India and the International Energy Agency. **India and EU also agreed to exchange closely on clean energy in the frame of G20.**

The European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 27 member states that are located primarily in Europe. A monetary union was established in 1999, coming into full force in 2002, and is composed of 19 member states which use the euro currency. The union and EU citizenship were established when the Maastricht Treaty came into force in 1993. The EU traces its origins to the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the European Economic Community (EEC), established, respectively, by the 1951 Treaty of Paris and 1957 Treaty of Rome. The original member states of what came to be known as the European Communities were the Inner Six: Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany. The United Kingdom became the first member state to leave the EU on 31 January 2020. Ursula Gertrud von der Leyen is a German politician and physician who has been President of the European Commission since 1 December 2019. Charles Michel is a Belgian politician serving as President of the European Council.

IGI Airport adjudged the ‘Best Airport in India and Central Asia’ this year by Skytrax

- **The Centre has said the Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi has been adjudged the ‘Best Airport in India and Central Asia’ this year by Skytrax.** Delhi airport along with the others in Hyderabad, Mumbai, and Bengaluru feature in the World To 100 airports list published by Skytrax.
- **This prestigious award is considered the most significant award for the airport industry, and Delhi has been adjudged after votes by customers in the survey. For the uninitiated, Skytrax is best known to assess customer service and facilities over 550 airports across the globe.** It is considered one of the most prestigious accolades for the airport industry and is announced based on the votes by customers in an annual global airport customer satisfaction survey.
- **According to the reports, the announcement was made by the GMR-led consortium — Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) which operates the national capital’s Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA).**

11th edition of Exercise EKUVERIN between India and Maldives to be conducted at Kadhdhoo Island

- **The 11th edition of Exercise EKUVERIN-21 between India and Maldives, held at Kadhdhoo Island, Maldives.** Ekuverin means “Friends” in the Dhivehi language. It is an Indo – Aryan language. It is spoken in India, Lakshadweep and Maldives.
- **The exercise enhances synergy and inter-operability between the Armed Forces of both nations in terms of understanding transnational terrorism both on land and at sea, conducting Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Insurgency Operations and sharing best military practices and experiences.**
- **The 11th edition of Exercise EKUVERIN between India and Maldives was conducted at Kadhdhoo Island, Maldives. The exercise will enhance synergy and inter-operability between the Armed Forces of both nations in terms of understanding transnational terrorism both on land and at sea, conducting Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Insurgency Operations and sharing best military practices and experiences.** Besides rigorous training, the joint military exercise also included cultural and sports activities to enhance defence cooperation and bilateral relations.
- **The exercise will go a long way in strengthening India’s relations with the Maldives amidst emerging security dynamics in the Indian Ocean Region. The Exercise is being conducted between India and Maldives since 2008. In 2019, the exercise was held in Pune, Maharashtra and in 2018, it was held in the Maldives.**

Maldives is a South Asian country, located in the Indian Ocean, situated in the Arabian Sea. Male is the capital and most populated city, traditionally called the “King’s Island” for its central location. Maldivian rufiyaa is the currency of the Maldives. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih is the current President of the Maldives.

Himachal Pradesh first in India to jab all eligible adults with both doses of COVID-19 vaccine

- **Himachal Pradesh became the first state in India to achieve 100 per cent vaccination against COVID-19 among all eligible adults. Himachal Pradesh was also the first state to achieve 100 per cent vaccination of the first dose of COVID-19 vaccine in August earlier this year. Kinnaur became the first district in Himachal Pradesh to declare full vaccination for both doses last month followed by Bilaspur, Solan and Lahaul-Spiti.**

Himachal Pradesh (“Province of the Snow-laden Mountains”) is a state in the northern part of India. Situated in the Western Himalayas, it is one of the eleven mountain states and is characterized by an extreme landscape featuring several peaks and extensive river systems. Himachal Pradesh is the northernmost state of India and shares borders with the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh to the north, and the states of Punjab to the west, Haryana to the southwest, Uttarakhand to the southeast and a very narrow border with Uttar Pradesh to the South. Himachal Pradesh is also known as ‘Dev Bhoomi’ or ‘Land of God’ and ‘Veer Bhoomi’ which means ‘Land of Braves’. Jai Ram Thakur is currently serves as the Chief Minister of the state of Himachal Pradesh in India. Rajendra Arlekar is the current Governor of Himachal Pradesh.

Assam CM Announces ‘Assam Baibhav’ Award To Industrialist Ratan Tata

- **On the occasion of Asom Divas or Assam Day, the state Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced to confer the most prestigious ‘Asom Baibhav’ award to the industrialist Ratan Tata.**
- **Asom Baibhav award is the biggest award of the state. Ratan Tata is the chairman of the Tata group and the respected industrialist in the world. He served as the chairman of Tata groups from 1990-2012.**

Ghaziabad’s Nehru World School becomes UP’s first PASCH certified school

- **Ghaziabad’s Nehru World School (NWS) has become the first school in Uttar Pradesh to be integrated into the PASCH network, a cooperative organization of schools around the globe supported by the German Federal Foreign Office. These schools promote the teaching of German as a foreign language. This makes NWS only the fifth school across India and the only school from Uttar Pradesh to gain this recognition.**
- **For the unversed, PASCH is an initiative of the German Federal Foreign Office in cooperation with the Central Agency for Schools Abroad, the Goethe-Institute, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the Educational Exchange Service (PAD) of the Secretariat of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs in the Federal Republic of Germany.**
- **The PASCH stands for “Schools: Partners for the Future” and aims at awakening interest and enthusiasm for Germany, motivating young people to learn German and creating an international network of schools.**

5th Indian Ocean Conference held in Abu Dhabi

- **Union Minister of External Affairs (EAM) Subrahmanyam Jaishankar has visited Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE) to attend the 5th Indian Ocean Conference on December 4-5, 2021. The theme of the conference was ‘Indian Ocean: Ecology, Economy, Epidemic’. The Conference is chaired by Sri Lankan President, Gotabaya Rajapaksa & Vice Chairs are S.Jaishankar, Vivian Balakrishnan, Sayyid Badr Bin Hamad Bin Hamoud Al Busaidi.**
- **External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar has stressed on the importance of respecting and facilitating freedom of navigation and overflight and unimpeded commerce in a globalised world. One is the American withdrawal from Afghanistan and the second is the impact of Covid on a region that is particularly vulnerable to health and economic stresses.**

The Indian Ocean is the third-largest of the world’s five oceanic divisions, covering 70,560,000 km² or 19.8% of the water on Earth’s surface. It is bounded by Asia to the north, Africa to the west and Australia to the east. The Indian Ocean has been known by its present name since at least 1515 when the Latin form Oceanus Orientalis Indicus (“Indian Eastern Ocean”) is attested, named for India, which projects into it. It was earlier known as the Eastern Ocean.

Thrissur and Nilambur in the UNESCO Global Cities City Network

- Kerala Local Government Minister MV Govindan has said that the government's recommendation to include the Thrissur Corporation and the Nilambur Municipality in the UNESCO Global Learning City (Global Learning City) network has been accepted.
- For the first time in the country, two cities in Kerala are rising to the status of global learning cities. The Central Government approved the recommendation of the State Government and recommended Thrissur and Nilambur for the Global Study City Plan.
- KILA in the Thrissur Corporation and the School of Architecture and Planning in the Thrissur College of Engineering are jointly developing it into a global learning city. The plans are for ten years. International standard knowledge centers will be set up in Nilambur.
- The projects required to uplift other cities in Kerala globally will be implemented at the behest of KILA. It intends to co-operate with UNESCO to elevate the Kochi Corporation to the status of City of Design, to transform the Kozhikode Corporation into the City of Literature and to elevate the Kannur Corporation to the City of Craft and Focus. The Minister explained that he would work with UNSDG to transform the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation into a City of Peace and IUCN to transform the Kollam Corporation into a Biodiversity City.

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and is a specialised agency of the United Nations (UN). It seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture. UNESCO's programmes contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals defined in Agenda 2030, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015. Political and economic arrangements of governments are not enough to secure the lasting and sincere support of the peoples. Peace must be founded upon dialogue and mutual understanding. Peace must be built upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of humanity. It is headquartered at the World Heritage Centre in Paris, France. Audrey Azoulay is a French civil servant and politician who has been serving as the Director-General of the UNESCO since 2017, becoming the second female leader of the organization.

Cyclone Jawad is first cyclone to hit Odisha in December in 130 years

- Cyclone Jawad hits Odisha coast as predicted, it was the first one to do so to the state in December in India Meteorological Department (IMD)'s nearly 130 years of recorded history. Heavy rains lashed parts of Odisha as remnants of cyclone Jawad, which has weakened into a deep depression, neared the coast, officials said.
- The coastal state has been hit by more than 100 cyclones since 1891, when IMD started compiling cyclone data. "However, none of the cyclones hit the state in December in around 130 years".

Saudi Arabia has given the cyclone its name 'Jawad'. The meaning 'Jawad' is liberal or merciful. The carries significance as this cyclonic storm will not be as severe as the previous ones. Cyclones are formed over the oceanic water in the tropical region.

Centre forms three-member committee to review criteria for EWS quota

- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment announced the formation of a three-member committee to review the criteria for Economically Weaker Section (EWS) reservations.
- The committee will comprise Former Finance Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey, Member Secretary ICSSR Prof VK Malhotra and Principal Economic Advisor to the Indian government Sanjeev Sanyal. The committee will examine various approaches followed in the country so far for identifying the economically weaker sections. It will also send its recommendations to the Centre in the next three weeks.
- The office memorandum issued by the ministry, signed by joint secretary RP Meena, states that the committee is being set up "in accordance with the commitment" given to the Supreme Court to "revisit the criteria for determining the economically weaker sections in terms of the provisions of the explanation to Article 15 of the Constitution".

- The government had submitted to the Supreme Court that it would revisit the Rs 8 lakh annual income criteria for EWS to be eligible for reservation benefits. The issue had arisen after NEET aspirants challenged notification dated July 29 which had announced a 27 per cent quota for OBCs and 10 per cent reservation for EWS in under the All-India Quota category. The government told the court that NEET counselling will be deferred till a decision is taken on the matter.
- In previous hearings, the Supreme Court had questioned the government on how the figure of Rs 8 lakh had been arrived at as the maximum income limit for the EWS quota.
- The government had in the past cited the Sinho Commission report of 2010 to push 10 per cent reservation for EWS. The commission had, however, not explicitly recommended a quota for EWS but said that they should get access to welfare schemes.

The One Hundred and Third Amendment of the Constitution of India, officially known as the Constitution (One Hundred and Third Amendment) Act, 2019, introduces 10% reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) of society for admission to Central Government-run educational institutions and private educational institutions (except for minority educational institutions), and for employment in Central Government jobs. The Amendment does not make such reservations mandatory in State Government-run educational institutions or State Government jobs. However, some states have chosen to implement the 10% reservation for economically weaker sections. Currently, the quota can be availed by persons with an annual gross household income of up to Rs. 8 lakh. Families that own over 5 acres of agricultural land, a house over 1,000 square feet, a plot of over 100-yards in a notified municipal area or over a 200-yards plot in a non-notified municipal area cannot avail the reservation. Persons belonging to communities that already have reservations such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and the “creamy layer” of Other Backward Classes are also not eligible for reservation under this quota.

PM Narendra Modi in Dehradun to lay foundation of Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Dehradun, Uttarakhand where he inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of multiple projects including the ambitious Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor worth around Rs. 18,000 crore.
- The corridor will also have Asia’s largest wildlife elevated corridor (12 km) for unrestricted wildlife movement. Also, the 340-metre long tunnel near Dat Kaali temple, Dehradun will help reduce the impact on wildlife, the government has stated.
- The corridor is expected to boost the overall economy of the region. In the statement, the government said that this project will provide seamless connectivity and reduce logistics costs. The construction of the Delhi-Dehradun corridor is also expected to give impetus to the development of tourism, especially in Haridwar, a popular pilgrimage site.
- Apart from this, he also laid the foundation stone of 10 development projects and inaugurate seven others. Most of these projects are focused on improving the road infrastructure of Dehradun, making travel safer to the city, situated at the foothills of the Himalayas.

GRSE launches first large survey vessel Sandhayak for Indian Navy

- Indian shipbuilder Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) has achieved a new milestone with the launch of the first large survey vessel for the Indian Navy. Called Sandhayak, the vessel is the first in the series of four ships being built under the Survey Vessel Large (SVL) project. It has been built at GRSE.
- Indian State Defence Minister Ajay Bhatt, who was present at the launch ceremony, said that the ship’s launch is a new milestone for the country’s vision of ‘New India’ by 2030. In October 2018, the Indian Ministry of Defence and GRSE signed the contract to build the four survey ships. Featuring over 80% indigenous content by cost, the ships are fully designed by GRSE and are being built using ‘Integrated Construction’ concepts.
- The ‘Launch’ symbolizes the “birth” of the ship as she makes her first contact with water and is floated out for from her building berth. The ceremony was conducted in true maritime traditions with the application of vermilion, breaking of coconut on the ship’s bow and chanting of vedic mantras.

Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Ltd, abbreviated as GRSE, is one of India's leading shipyards, located in Kolkata, West Bengal. It builds and repairs commercial and naval vessels.

Social Justice and Empowerment Minister launches SRESHTA scheme for socio economic upliftment of SC students

- Social Justice and Empowerment Minister **Dr Virendra Kumar** launched **Scheme for Residential Education for Students in High Schools in Targeted Areas (SRESHTA)** for socio-economic upliftment and overall development of Scheduled Castes students.
- The scheme was **launched on the occasion of Mahaparinirvan Diwas of Dr B R Ambedkar** in New Delhi. The scheme will **enable bright SC students to have a better future by getting high-quality education**. It will also aid in **controlling dropout rates of SC students from class 9th to 12th**.
- In the next five year the Ministry will extend support to **around 25 thousand meritorious SC students involving 300 crore rupees for providing them quality residential education**. The Ministry also transferred Post Matric Scholarship to more than **four lakh SC and ST students through Direct Benefit Transfer amounting to over 245 crore rupees**. **50 percent of these beneficiaries are women**.

Centre initiates Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages of India

- **The Government of India** has initiated a Scheme known as **“Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages of India” (SPPEL)**, being implemented by **Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysore**. This scheme aims at **protection, preservation and documentation of all the mother tongues/languages of India which are spoken by less than 10,000 people**.
- **The University Grants Commission (UGC)** has a Scheme for **“Establishment of Centres for Endangered Languages”** under which centres were **approved in respect of nine Central Universities**. Further the UGC has been implementing a scheme namely **‘Funding support to the State Universities for study and research in indigenous and endangered language in India’** under which seven Universities were approved for grants. In addition, a collaborative project between **Maharaja Sayajirao University, Baroda and BHASA, a Non Governmental Organisation working for Promotion and Preservation of Indigenous and Endangered languages** was approved by UGC.

Article 343 of the Indian Constitution stated that the official language of the Union is Hindi in Devanagari script, with official use of English to continue for 15 years from 1947. Later, a constitutional amendment, The Official Languages Act, 1963, allowed for the continuation of English alongside Hindi in the Indian government indefinitely until legislation decides to change it. The Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution lists 22 languages, which have been referred to as scheduled languages and given recognition, status and official encouragement. In addition, the Government of India has awarded the distinction of classical language to **Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu**. Classical language status is given to languages which have a rich heritage and independent nature. **Despite the misconceptions, Hindi is not the national language of India; the Constitution of India does not give any language the status of national language**

NITI Aayog CSE and release ‘Waste-wise cities’ – compendium of best practices in municipal solid waste management

- **India's solid waste management sector has witnessed unparalleled growth in last few years**. The **Swachh Bharat Mission Phase 2** is launched to further strengthen the efforts for a clean India. The report, titled **“Waste-Wise Cities: Best Practices in Municipal Solid Waste Management”**, documents best practices from 28 cities in 15 states of India.
- The new report is the result of a country-wide study and survey jointly conducted by **NITI Aayog and CSE**. The repository is the result of five months of **extensive on-ground collective research that was initiated in July 2021**.
- **The entire gamut of municipal solid waste management has been seen from a cross-section of 10 different aspects that explains a sustainable value chain**. These thematic aspects range from source segregation, material

recovery and technological innovations to the management of different kinds of wastes and systems such as biodegradables, plastics, e-waste, C&D waste and landfills.

Waste management in India falls under the purview of the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC). In 2016, this ministry released the Solid Wastage Management (SWM) Rules, which replaced by the Municipal Solid Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, and 2000 of which had been in place for 16 years. This national policy plays a significant role in the acknowledgement and inclusion of the informal sector (waste pickers) into the waste management process for the first time. India generates 62 million tonnes of waste each year. About 43 million tonnes (70%) are collected of which about 12 million tonnes are treated and 31 million tonnes are dumped in landfill sites. Waste segregation at source is mandatory. Households are required to separate waste into three streams - Organic or Biodegradable waste, Dry waste (such as plastic, paper, metal and wood), and Domestic Hazardous waste (diapers, napkins, mosquito repellents, cleaning agents). Further, bulk waste generators such as hotels and hospitals are expected to treat organic waste either onsite or by collaborating with the urban local body.

Education Ministry launches mobile app called Bhasha Sangam

- **Education Ministry has launched a mobile app called Bhasha Sangam in order to help people acquire basic conversation ability in languages other than one's mother tongue to at least 75 lakh people.**
- **This language learning initiative has been taken under Ek Bharat -Shrestha Bharat Programme as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The App has more than 100 sentences of common usage, both in text and audio format, in 22 Indian languages.**

The **Ministry of Education (MoE)**, previously the **Ministry of Human Resource Development (1985-2020)**, is responsible for the implementation and formulation of the **National Policy on Education** approved by Union cabinet of India and to ensure that it is implemented in letter and spirit. **Maulana Abul Kalam Azad** is the **First Minister of Education** in the Indian. He is commonly remembered as **Maulana Azad**; the word **Maulana** is an honorific meaning 'Our Master' and he had adopted **Azad (Free)** as his pen name. The current **Union Minister for Education is Dharmendra Pradhan** since 7 July 2021. **Shri Pradhan** currently represents **Madhya Pradesh** in the **Rajya Sabha** as **Member of Parliament**.

Parliament passes HC and SC Judges (Salaries & Conditions of Service) Amendment Bill, 2021

- **Parliament has passed the High Court and Supreme Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Amendment Bill, 2021** with the **Rajya Sabha** returning it to the **Lok Sabha** after the discussion. **As it was a money bill therefore the bill has been returned to the Lower House.** The **Lok Sabha** has already passed it. The **Bill seeks to amend the High Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Act, 1954, and the Supreme Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Act, 1958.**
- **The Bill clarifies that a person will be entitled to the additional pension or family pension from the first day of the month in which they complete the minimum age under the concerned age bracket.** The scale contains **five age brackets with a minimum age of 80, 85, 90, 95, and 100 years**, and the additional quantum increases with age from 20 percent to 100 percent of the pension or family pension. Replying to a debate on the bill in the **Rajya Sabha**, **Union Minister for Law and Justice Kiren Rijju** said that the government will leave no unturned in strengthening the judicial system of the country.
- **He informed that the government has approved the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for Development of Infrastructure Facilities for Judiciary for a further five years from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2026 at a total cost of nine thousand crore rupees.** He said, the scheme will help construct court halls and residential units for judicial officers of **District and Subordinate Courts, Lawyer Halls, and toilet complexes.** **Mr Rijju** said that **90 percent of the pending cases are at Subordinate Courts** which needs to be strengthened. He said, the **issue of infrastructure development in High Courts and Subordinate Courts lies in the domain of State governments.**

Kiren Rijju is an **Indian lawyer and politician from Arunachal Pradesh** who is the current **Minister of Law and Justice of India**, in the **Second Modi ministry** from 7 July 2021. **He is a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party.** In the 2014 general election, **Rijju** was again elected as a **Member of Parliament in the 16th Lok Sabha**, representing the **Arunachal West constituency.**

Former CEC Sunil Arora joins Board of Advisors for International Institute for Democracy & Electoral Assistance

- **Former Chief Election Commissioner of India Sunil Arora joined the Board of Advisors for International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA).** Mr. Arora has rich leadership experience, knowledge and skills to contribute significantly to the working of the International Institute. **The Institute is assisted by a 15 member Board of Advisors** who are eminent personalities or experts from a wide variety of backgrounds.
- **IDEA is an intergovernmental organization based in Stockholm, Sweden** with a mission to support sustainable democracy worldwide. **The organization currently has 34 member countries. India is one of the founding members of IDEA.** Election Commission of India, ECI firmly believes in deepening and strengthening Democracies worldwide through knowledge sharing among Election Management Bodies. **The organization is headquartered in Stockholm, Sweden.**

CURTAIN RAISER PANEX-21

- **The Indian Army is organizing an exercise named “PANEX-21” for the member nations of Bay of Bengal Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) countries.** The exercise will involve **BIMSTEC Countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand and India.**
- A Curtain Raiser Event for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief exercise, **PANEX-21, for the member nations of BIMSTEC countries,** was held at **Kothari Auditorium DRDO Bhawan, New Delhi.** **The exercise is planned to be conducted from 20-22 Dec 21 at Pune** and will witness **participation from subject matter experts and delegates from India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand.**
- To foster joint planning and build regional cooperation for responding to natural disasters. **The exercise will look at analyzing the capabilities of member states** and share **best practices for response to disasters,** including capability development and training. Protocols for military-to-military cooperation will also be discussed.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurates AIIMS, fertiliser plant in UP’s Gorakhpur

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation three mega projects, including an AIIMS and a major fertiliser plant, in Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath’s home turf Gorakhpur.** The other projects he inaugurated is a **Regional Medical Research Centre of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).**
- **The three big-ticket projects are worth over Rs 9,600 crore.** **The newly built fertiliser plant will be operated by the Hindustan Urvarak Rasayan Limited (HURL).** **The Gorakhpur AIIMS, built at a cost of Rs 1,011 crore, will benefit not only the people of eastern Uttar Pradesh** but also a huge population of Bihar, Jharkhand and Nepal with its world-class health facilities. Similarly, the regional medical research centre set up at a cost of Rs 36 crore will facilitate the test and research of vector-borne diseases, they added. The high-tech lab will decrease the dependency of the area on big cities for tests related to vector-borne diseases.

Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in India as well as the most populous country subdivision in the world. It was created on **1 April 1937 as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during British rule,** and was renamed **Uttar Pradesh in 1950,** giving the acronym UP. The state is **divided into 18 divisions and 75 districts** with the **capital being Lucknow.** On **9 November 2000,** a new state, **Uttarakhand,** was carved out from the state’s Himalayan hill region. **The two major rivers of the state, the Ganges and Yamuna, join at Allahabad** and flow further east as Ganges. **The state contributes 80 seats to the lower house of the Indian Parliament, Lok Sabha and 31 seats to the upper house of the Indian Parliament, Rajya Sabha.**

NCW launches pan-India capacity building programme ‘She is a Changemaker’ for women in Politics

- To improve leadership skills of grassroot women political leaders, **the National Commission for Women (NCW) launched a pan-India capacity building programme, ‘She is a Changemaker’ for women representatives at all levels, gram panchayats to parliament members and political workers including office**

bearers of National/State political parties. The capacity building programme will be undertaken in association with region-wise training institutes with an objective to undertake capacity building of women political leaders and improve their decision making and communication skills including, oration, writing, etc.

- The official launch of training programmes under ‘She is a Changemaker’ series was held in collaboration with RhambhauMhalgiPrabodhini, Thane, Maharashtra. The programme was launched by Ms Rekha Sharma, Chairperson, National Commission for Women.
- The three-day capacity building programme for ‘Women in Municipal Corporation’ was organised from 7th to 9th December. Speaking at the launch event, Ms Sharma said that increased women participation in politics is the need of the hour and the Commission is committed towards helping them in their journey to the Parliament.

The National Commission for Women (NCW) is the statutory body of the Government of India, generally concerned with advising the government on all policy matters affecting women. It was established on 31 January 1992 under the provisions of the Indian Constitution, as defined in the 1990 National Commission for Women Act. The first head of the commission was Jayanti Patnaik. Rekha Sharma is the current chairperson.

NITI Aayog launches ‘e-Sawari India E-Bus Coalition’ in tie-up with CESL

- Government think tank NITI Aayog announced the launch of ‘e-Sawari India Electric Bus Coalition’ in partnership with Convergence Energy Service Ltd (CESL) and World Resources Institute, India (WRI India), with support from Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative (TUMI).
- The coalition has been launched with the aim to share knowledge and learnings on e-bus adoption in India among various stakeholders, including central and state governments, city-level government agencies, transit service providers, original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), financing institutions and ancillary service providers.

FM Sitharaman virtually participates in G20 International Seminar hosted by G20 Presidency of Indonesia

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman virtually participated in the G20 International Seminar hosted in Bali by the G20 Presidency of Indonesia. The G20’s theme for the year is, “Recover Together, Recover Stronger”.
- Mrs Sitharaman stressed on the fact that for a strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive recovery of the global economy, it is imperative to ensure collective progress of all countries. She also stressed on the importance of Inclusion, Investment, Innovation and Institutions to support the path of global recovery.

The G20 (or Group of Twenty) is an international forum for the governments and central bank governors from 19 countries and the European Union (EU). Founded in 1999 with the aim to discuss policy pertaining to the promotion of international financial stability, the G20 has expanded its agenda since 2008 and heads of government or heads of state, as well as finance ministers, foreign ministers and think tanks, have periodically conferred at summits ever since. It seeks to address issues that go beyond the responsibilities of any single nation. The G20 members are: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, India, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union.

Cabinet gives nod to extension of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Gramin till March 2024; also approves Ken-Betwa river interlinking project

- The Union Cabinet has approved continuation of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Gramin till March 2024. Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur said, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana will ensure housing for all in rural areas. He said, the scheme will provide assistance for construction of remaining over 155 lakh houses and will achieve target of 2.95 crore pucca houses with basic amenities.
- Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) is an initiative by the Government of India in which affordable housing will be provided to the urban poor with a target of building 2 crore (20 million) affordable houses by 31 March 2022. It has two components: Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) (PMAY-U) for the urban

poor and Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (Gramin) (PMAY-G and also PMAY-R) for the rural poor. This scheme is converged with other schemes to ensure houses have a toilet, Saubhagya Yojana electricity connection, Ujjwala Yojana LPG connection, access to drinking water and Jan Dhan banking facilities, etc.

- On December 8, the Union cabinet approved the Ken-Betwa river interlinking project, apparently intended to address water scarcity of the Bundelkhand region across Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. In its current form, it entails the construction of a dam and a channel between the Ken and Betwa rivers. The project has a total outlay of Rs 44,605 crore.
- The Ken-Betwa river interlinking project will connect the Ken and Betwa rivers and transfer water from the former to the latter to irrigate agricultural tracts of and supply drinking water to the Bundelkhand region. The Ministry of Jal Shakti and the Chief Ministers of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh signed the project's memorandum of agreement in March 2021.
- According to them, the project will take eight years to set up, including building the 'Daudhan dam' on the Ken river in Madhya Pradesh's Chhatarpur district, inside the Panna Tiger Reserve. From here, a canal is expected to carry water from the Ken to the Betwa River through the districts of Chhatarpur and Tikamgarh in Madhya Pradesh and Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh.
- According to the cabinet's press release issued after its approval for the project, the project will reportedly generate 103 MW of hydroelectric power and 27 MW of solar power, bring drinking water to about 62 lakh people and irrigate some 10.62 lakh hectares of land – every year.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Saryu Canal National Project in Uttar Pradesh

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh and inaugurated the Saryu Nahar National Project. The work on the project started in 1978 but due to lack of continuity of budgetary support, interdepartmental coordination, and adequate monitoring, it got delayed and was not completed even after nearly four decades. Prime Minister's vision for farmer welfare and empowerment, and his commitment to prioritize long pending projects of national importance, brought much-needed focus on the project.
- Consequently, in 2016, the project was brought under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana with the target to complete it in a time-bound manner. The renewed focus on the project has resulted in the project being completed in only about four years. The Saryu Nahar Project has been built with a total cost of more than nine thousand 800 crore rupees, out of which more than four thousand 600 crore rupees were provisioned in the last four years. The project also involves the interlinking of five rivers - Ghaghara, Saryu, Rapti, Banganga, and Rohini to ensure optimum usage of water resources of the region. The project will provide assured water for irrigation of over 14 lakh hectares of land and benefit about 29 lakh farmers of over six thousand 200 villages.

CDS Gen Bipin Rawat dies in air crash near Coonoor in Tamil Nadu

- Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat has died in the air crash. General Bipin Rawat, his wife Madhulika Rawat and 11 other persons on board have died in the unfortunate accident. The accident occurred happened at Nanjappanchathiram area amid heavy mist and early visuals showed the helicopter in flames. The army chief was on his way to the Defence Staff College in Wellington.
- The IAF said that a Court of Inquiry has been ordered into the accident. The officials were travelling in an Mi-17VH chopper that took off from the Sulur IAF Station in nearby Coimbatore. According to the IAF, Group Captain Varun Singh is the sole survivor of the crash. He is under treatment at the Military Hospital in Wellington.
- General Bipin Rawat was an alumnus of National Defence Academy, Defence Services Staff College and National Defence College. He was commissioned on 16th December in 1978 into the Fifth Battalion of the Eleventh Gorkha Rifles of the Infantry, the Battalion which was Commanded by his father.
- During his distinguished career in the Army, Bipin Rawat commanded an Infantry Battalion along the Line of Actual Control in the Eastern Sector, a Rashtriya Rifles Sector, an Infantry Division in the Kashmir Valley and a Corps in the North East. Bipin Rawat had also commanded a Multinational Brigade in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- As an Army Commander, he commanded a theatre of operations along the Western Front and was appointed the Vice Chief of the Army Staff before assuming office of Chief of the Army Staff. The General was the Chief of the Army Staff from 31st December 2016 to 31st December 2019. As a first Chief of Defence

Staff Bipin Rawat assumed the charge on 1st January 2020. He was awarded several gallantry and distinguished service awards during his service in the Army.

The Chief of Defence Staff of the Indian Armed Forces (CDS) is the military head and chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee of the Indian Armed Forces. CDS is the senior-most and highest-ranking uniformed officer on active duty in the Indian military, and is the principal staff officer and chief military adviser to the Minister of Defence. The Chief also heads the Department of Military Affairs. The first Chief of Defence Staff was Bipin Rawat who took office on 1 January 2020, and held it until his death in a helicopter crash on 8 December 2021. The CDS is a four-star officer selected from among the serving officers of the Indian Armed Forces. While being “first among equals” among the service chiefs, the CDS is a single-point military advisor to the defence minister. The CDS heads the Department of Military Affairs under the Ministry of Defence, as its secretary. Apart from heading the DMA, the CDS is the Permanent Chairperson of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (PC-CoSC). The position of the Chief of Defence Staff was created with the aim of improving coordination, tri-service effectiveness and overall integration of the combat capabilities of the Indian armed forces.

Madhya Pradesh Government implements Police Commissionerate system in Bhopal and Indore

- Madhya Pradesh government implemented Police Commissionerate system in Bhopal and Indore. The Police Commissionerate system has been implemented in view of the law and order requirements arising out of geographical expansion and technology. **Inspector-General of Police level officer will be the Commissioner of Police in both the cities.** The Commissioner of Police will have the powers of the Executive Magistrate.
- Home Minister Dr. Narottam Mishra has informed that for **effective implementation of law and order and population of both the cities exceeding 10 lakh**, the State Government has declared urban areas and borders as metropolitan areas as per constitutional provisions.

Madhya Pradesh (meaning Central Province) is a state in central India. Its capital is Bhopal, and the largest city is Indore. Madhya Pradesh is the second largest Indian state by area and the fifth largest state by population. It borders the states of Uttar Pradesh to the northeast, Chhattisgarh to the southeast, Maharashtra to the south, Gujarat to the west, and Rajasthan to the northwest. **Mangubhai Chhaganbhai Patel is the current Governor of Madhya Pradesh. Shivraj Singh Chouhan is the current Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, having been elected to the same position 3 times in the past, and a Member of Legislative Assembly in Madhya Pradesh from Budhni.**

Haiderpur Wetland added to Ramsar site; total tally goes up to 47

- Haiderpur Wetland of Western Uttar Pradesh has been recognized as 47th Ramsar site in the country and 10th in Uttar Pradesh and 2463rd in the world, which has been confirmed by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- India’s efforts to improve its wetlands and preserve its ecology is bearing fruits as **India is now a land of 47 Ramsar sites. The latest on the list is Uttar Pradesh’s Haiderpur wetland.** It has been added to the list of Indian wetlands of international importance.
- **The human-made Haiderpur wetland spreads over an area of 6,908 hectares in Bijnor, Uttar Pradesh.** Formed in 1984 on a floodplain of the River Ganga on the Madhya Ganga Barrage, the wetland is located within the boundaries of Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary.
- In terms of supporting life, the wetland is a habitat for numerous animals and plant species. **It homes more than 30 species of plants, over 300 species of birds including 102 waterbirds, more than 40 fish,** and more than ten mammal species. Further, **it is home to more than 15 globally threatened species** such as the critically endangered gharial, endangered hog deer, black-bellied tern, steppe eagle, Indian skimmer, and gold mahseer.

The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty adopted on February 2, 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar, on the southern shore of the Caspian Sea. It is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. It came into force for India on February 1, 1982. It is also known as the Convention on Wetlands. Those wetlands which are of international importance are declared as Ramsar sites. The aim of the Ramsar list is to develop and maintain an international network of wetlands which are important for the conservation of global biological diversity and for sustaining human life through the maintenance of their ecosystem components, processes and benefits.

Chairperson, Lokpal of India, Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose inaugurates Digital Platform for Management of complaints- ‘LokpalOnline’

- Chairperson, Lokpal of India, Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose inaugurated’ a digital Platform for Management of Complaints called ‘LokpalOnline’ that can be accessed by all citizens of the country and complaints can be filed from anywhere, anytime at <http://lokpalonline.gov.in>.
- LokpalOnline is an end-to-end digital solution for the management of complaints against public servants filed under the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013. Justice Ghose said that the LokpalOnline is a web-based facility, which will quicken the disposal of complaints in an accountable, transparent and efficient manner with benefits to all stakeholders.

A Lokpal (“defender of people” or “People’s Friend”) is an anti-corruption authority or body of ombudsman who represents the public interest in the Republic of India. The current and the first Chairperson of Lokpal is Pinaki Chandra Ghose. The Lokpal has jurisdiction over central government to inquire into allegations of corruption against its public functionaries and for matters connected to corruption. The Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act was passed in 2013 with amendments in parliament, following the Jan Lokpal movement led by Anna Hazare in 2011. The Lokpal is responsible for enquiring into corruption charges at the national level while the Lokayukta performs the same function at the state level. The age of Lokpal (chairperson or member) on the date of assuming office as the chairperson or a member should not be less than 45 years.

Centre accepts plea, grants Mithila Makhana GI tag

- The Geographical Indications Registry (GIR) under the Central ministry of commerce has accepted the plea to rename Bihar Makhana as Mithila Makhana and also suggested further amendments in the brand logo to better reflect its origins apart from identifying and protecting the product’s Geographical Indications (GI) rights. The development has put an end to the controversy over the branding of the mithila region’s one of the most famous produce in makhana or fox nut.
- The war over Makhana’s GI tagging started after the Sabour based Bihar Agriculture University (BAU) filed an application on behalf of Purnia based fox nut growers’ association – also known as the Mithilanchal Makhana Utpadak Sangh (MMUS) – arguing for naming their produce as Bihar Makhana for the welfare of fox nut growers from the state.

A geographical indication (GI) is a name or sign used on certain products which corresponds to a specific geographical location or origin (e.g., a town, region, or country). India, as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), enacted the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 has come into force with effect from 15 September 2003. GIs have been defined under Article 22 (1) of the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement as: “Indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a member, or a region or a locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographic origin.” The GI tag ensures that none other than those registered as authorised users (or at least those residing inside the geographic territory) are allowed to use the popular product name. Darjeeling tea became the first GI tagged product in India, in 2004–2005. The registration of a geographical indication is valid for a period of 10 years. It can be renewed from time to time for further period of 10 years each.

India’s Harnaaz Sandhu wins Miss Universe 2021 crown

- India’s Harnaaz Sandhu has been crowned Miss Universe 2021, two decades after Lara Dutta won the title in 2000. 21-year-old Harnaaz has won the Miss Universe crown at the contest held in Eilat, Israel. Harnaaz edged out contestants from Paraguay and South Africa to bag the crown.
- India had earlier won the coveted crown twice with Sushmita Sen bagging the title in 1994 and Lara Dutta in 2000. The 21-year-old Harnaaz, hailing from Chandigarh, has now joined the league of these incredible women.
- Ms Sandhu, who started her journey in pageantry at the age of 17, has previously been crowned Miss Diva 2021, Femina Miss India Punjab 2019 and was even placed in the Top 12 at Femina Miss India 2019. She has also worked in Punjabi films like “Yaara Diyan Poo Baran” and “Bai Ji Kuttange”.

Miss Universe is an annual international beauty pageant that is run by the United States-based Miss Universe Organization. It is one of the most watched pageants in the world with an estimated audience of over 500 million viewers in over 190 territories. Along with Miss World, Miss International, and Miss Earth, Miss Universe is one of the Big Four international beauty pageants. The title “Miss Universe” was first used by the International Pageant of Pulchritude in 1926. This contest was held annually until 1935, when the Great Depression and other events preceding World War II led to its demise.

India re-elected to International Maritime Organisation Council

- India has been re-elected to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council after elections were held at its Assembly in London for the 2022-23 biennium. India's election falls under the Category of 10 states with “the largest interest in international seaborne trade”, alongside Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The 32nd Assembly of IMO is currently meeting at the IMO headquarters in London.
- The newly elected Council will meet formally at the conclusion of the 32nd Assembly for the IMO's 126th session, when it will elect its Chair and Vice-Chair for the next biennium. India is re-elected to International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council, the High Commission of India in London said in a Twitter statement following the election.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) is a specialised agency of the United Nations responsible for regulating shipping. The IMO's primary purpose is to develop and maintain a comprehensive regulatory framework for shipping and its remit today includes maritime safety, environmental concerns, legal matters, technical co-operation, maritime security and the efficiency of shipping. The IMO was established following agreement at a UN conference held in Geneva in 1948 and the IMO came into existence ten years later, meeting for the first time in 1959. Headquartered in London, United Kingdom, the IMO currently has 174 member states and three associate members. Kitack Lim is the current South Korean secretary general of the IMO.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Kashi Vishwanath corridor in Varanasi

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in March 2019 and the project is ready for inauguration in a record 33 months.
- The idea behind the Corridor was to decongest the route to the historic Shiva temple and make pathways for the comfort of pilgrims coming for darshan along with giving the temple a grand look. The Corridor connects the ancient Kashi Vishwanath Temple with the two ghats on river Ganga.
- The corridor has been built over an area of 5,000 hectares and the estimated cost of this project is close to 800 crore rupees. The inauguration ceremony is named Divya Kashi, Bhavya Kashi i.e. Divine Kashi, Grand Kashi. The inauguration was on a grand level with Diwali-like celebrations.

The Kashi Vishwanath Temple is one of the most famous Hindu temples dedicated to Lord Shiva. It is located in Vishwanath Gali of Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh in India. The Temple stands on the western bank of the holy river Ganga, and is one of the twelve Jyotirlingas, or Jyotirlingams, the holiest of Shiva Temples. The main deity is known by the names Shri Vishwanath and Vishweshwara (IAST: Vishveshvara or Vishveshvur) literally meaning Lord of the Universe. Varanasi was called Kashi (“shining”) in ancient times, and hence the temple is popularly called Kashi Vishwanath Temple. The etymology of the name Vishveshvara is Vishva: Universe, Ishvara: lord, one who has dominion. The current structure was built on an adjacent site by the Maratha ruler, Ahilya Bai Holkar of Indore in the year 1780.

Climate Change in New Syllabus for Maharashtra Schools

- The Maharashtra government has announced a new syllabus for classes 1-8 to teach the students about climate change and make them conscious about tackling the issues emanating from it.

- Under the **Majhi Vasundhara Abhiyan**, which aims to inculcate climate-conscious and green values in the young minds of Maharashtra, the **Department of Environment and Climate Change** and **UNICEF** have developed the ‘**Majhi Vasundhara**’ curriculum on environment for the school students. The new syllabus also aims at involving the students in the efforts for climate disaster mitigation.
- Speaking at an event to hand over the syllabus to the school education department, **State Environment Minister Aditya Thackeray** said, “**In this hour of climate emergency, the survival of the human race on Earth entirely depends on our actions.** Introducing this curriculum is our attempt at getting the next generation to start with a green thumb and be proactively involved in a pro-earth lifestyle.” **This initiative focuses on all the five elements of nature known as “Panchmahabhutas”, which includes bhumi (land), jal (water), vayu (air), agni (fire), akash (sky).**

Maharashtra is India’s second-most populous state and third-largest state by area. Nagpur is Maharashtra’s second capital and hosts the winter session of the state legislature. Pune is its cultural capital. Shiv Sena President Uddhav Thackeray takes oath as the Chief Minister of Maharashtra. Uddhav Thackeray is the first of his family to be the chief minister of Maharashtra. His father Bal Thackeray founded the Shiv Sena over five decades ago. Bhagat Singh Koshiyari is serving as the current Governor of Maharashtra.

IRCTC’s Shri Ramayan Yatra’ becomes world first train to get vegetarian certification

- The **Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)**’s ‘**Shri Ramayana Yatra**’ train on the **Ramayana circuit** commenced from Delhi’s Safdarjung railway station.
- In order to encourage vegetarian friendly railway services, the **Sattvik Council of India** in association with **Bureau Veritas** (global audit partner) provided ‘vegetarian certification’ to ‘**Shri Ramayan Yatra**’ at **Safdarjung railway station, New Delhi**. ‘**Shri Ramayana Yatra**’ theme based pilgrimage tour by **Dekho Apna Desh Deluxe AC Tourist train** become the **first vegetarian friendly train**.

Durga Puja in UNESCO’s Intangible Heritage list

- **Durga Puja** is a classic fusion of religion and culture, regarded with a lot of pride and celebrated predominantly by the **Bengali community**. Many regard it as an emotion more than a festival. While it is celebrated in many parts of the world, too, an official global recognition was impending. But now, the **Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage** has inscribed ‘**Durga Puja in Kolkata**’ on the **Representative List of the UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity** during its 16th session being held in Paris, France. The Committee commended Durga Puja for its initiatives to involve marginalized groups, and individuals as well as women in their participation in safeguarding the element.
- **Durga Puja** is a five-day festival which begins on the fifth night of the nine-day Navratri festival and ends on the tenth day, which is **Dashami**. During this time, people collectively worship and invoke Goddess Durga, who is regarded as the feminine energy of the cosmos, also known as ‘**Shakti**’. **Though originating in West Bengal, which has the largest Bengali community in the country, the festival — as mentioned earlier — is celebrated in many other parts of India, and also the world.** During this time, intricately-designed clay models of the Goddess are worshipped in ‘pandals’ and pavilions where people get together. Folk music, culinary, craft, and performing arts traditions are a part of the celebration.
- Thus Durga Puja, an ancient festival celebrated in the country for many centuries, has found a place on this list. **In total, 14 Intangible Cultural Heritage elements from the country have now been inscribed on UNESCO’s Representative List.**
- The **Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity** has **492 elements** currently. According to a press release, it includes “forms of expression that testify to the diversity of intangible heritage and raises awareness of its importance”. UNESCO intends to enhance the “visibility of communities’ cultural practices and know-how”, aiming to “safeguard the intangible cultural heritage of communities globally”.

UNESCO established its Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage with the aim of ensuring better protection of important intangible cultural heritages worldwide and the awareness of their significance. The list was established in 2008 when the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage took effect. UNESCO says, Intangible Cultural Heritage includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialised agency of the United Nations (UN) aimed at promoting world peace and security through international cooperation in education, the arts, the sciences, and culture. It has 193 member states and 11 associate members, as well as partners in the non-governmental, intergovernmental, and private sector. Headquartered at the World Heritage Centre in Paris, France, UNESCO has 53 regional field offices and 199 national commissions that facilitate its global mandate. UNESCO was founded in 1945 as the successor to the League of Nations' International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation. Its constitution establishes the agency's goals, governing structure, and operating framework. UNESCO's founding mission, which was shaped by the Second World War, is to advance peace, sustainable development and human rights by facilitating collaboration and dialogue among nations. Audrey Azoulay has been serving as the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) since 2017, becoming the second female leader of the organization. She previously served as France's Minister of Culture in the government of Prime Minister Manuel Valls from 2016 to 2017.

Centre approves implementation of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana for 2021-26

- Union Cabinet has approved implementation of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana for 2021-26. The scheme will benefit about 22 lakh farmers, including 2.5 lakh Schedule Caste and two lakh Schedule Tribe farmers.
- Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat said, this decision will bring positive change to lakhs of families. Central funding of 90 percent of water component for two national projects has been provisioned.
- These are Renuka Ji Dam Project in Himachal Pradesh and Lakhwar Multipurpose Project in Uttarakhand. Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme, Har Khet ko Paani and Watershed Development components have been approved for continuation during 2021-26.
- Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme a flagship programme of the government, aims for financial support to irrigation projects. Total additional irrigation potential creation targeted during 2021-26 under AIBP is 13.88 lakh hectares. Apart from focused completion of 60 ongoing projects including their 30.23 lakh hectare command area development, additional projects can also be taken up. The inclusion criteria have been relaxed for projects under tribal and drought-prone areas.

Karnataka to get its first Greenfield highway

- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has floated tenders for the development of a six-lane access controlled Greenfield highway from Badal village in Kalaburagi district, to Singanodi in Raichur district, a total distance of 177 km. This will be the first access controlled highway in the state, and first six-lane highway in North Karnataka.

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is an autonomous agency of the Government of India, set up in 1995 (Act 1988) and is responsible for management of a network of over 50,000 km of National Highways out of 1,32,499 km in India. It is a nodal agency of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. NHAI has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Space Research Organisation for satellite mapping of highways.

Chitkara University organizes world's first AI-technology based 'HACKDAY 2021'

- Giving a boost to technological innovation, Chitkara University, Himachal Pradesh, organised "HACKDAY 2021" under its Entrepreneurship Cell (E-Cell) 'JAZBA', which has been formed under the aegis of Chitkara University Centre for Entrepreneurship Education & Development (CEED).

- **The event provided the students a platform to explore their potential** as 17 teams of potential start-ups from CSE first year took part in the **world’s first AI-technology based hackathon**.
- **The first prize of HACKDAY was secured by the team “Pirates of Fire” founded by Harsh Srivastava**. The team’s idea revolved around an AI-based fire extinguisher robot which will know the occurrence of fire and will be able to extinguish it with sound. The team won soft commitment of Rs. 1 crore from the jury and investor Akhilesh Jain and a confirmed commitment of Rs. 1 Lakh towards prototype development.
- **The second prize was won by team “Goal diggers” founded by Aditya Sharma**. This team worked on a project which will help people suffering from Alzheimer’s disease and also help in curing depression.
- **Team “The weaponries” founded by Abhinav Sehgal won the third prize**. Their idea was to introduce AI holographic projection into the optical sight of a soldier by a new product – ‘HARA’ that is based on hologram, to match the requirements of future warfare.

Bill likely on increasing legal marriage age of women from 18 to 21 years

- According to sources the **government of India has decided to raise the legal age of marriage for women from 18 to 21 years, bringing it at par with that of men**. The Union Cabinet had cleared a proposal to bring in uniformity in the marriageable age of men and women.
- The government is likely to bring a bill in the ongoing Winter Session of Parliament to **amend the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006**. The proposed bill may also seek to make consequential changes to various personal laws relating to marriage of various communities to ensure a uniform marriage age.
- **For Hindus, The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 sets 18 years as the minimum age for the bride and 21 years as the minimum age for the groom. In Islam, the marriage of a minor who has attained puberty is considered valid. The Special Marriage Act, 1954 and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 also prescribe 18 and 21 years as the minimum age of consent for marriage for women and men, respectively. For the new age of marriage to be implemented, these laws are expected to be amended.**
- **As of now, the legal age of women to get married is 18 while that for men is 21 years**. The decision came a year after Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said that the government was deliberating on what should be the minimum age for marriage of women. **The decision is based on the recommendation of a four-member task force led by former Samata Party chief Jaya Jaitly.**

The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929, passed on 28 September 1929, in the Imperial Legislative Council of India, fixed the age of marriage for girls at 14 years and boys at 18 years. In 1949, after India’s independence, it was amended to 15 for girls, and in 1978 to 18 for girls and 21 for boys. It is popularly known as the Sharda Act, after its sponsor Harbilas Sharda. Har Bilas Sarada (1867–1955) was an Indian academic, judge and politician. He is best known for having introduced the Child Marriage Restraint Act (1929). It came into effect six months later on 1 April 1930 and applied to all of British India. It was a result of social reform movement in India. Despite strong opposition from the British authorities, the legislation was passed by the British Indian Government which had a majority of Indians. However, it lacked implementation from the British Indian government, largely due to the fear of British authorities losing support from their loyal Hindu and Muslim communalist groups.

Jharkhand: Hemant Soren launches sports scheme for Maoist-hit areas

- Launching the **Sports Action toward Harnessing Aspiration of Youth (SAHAY) scheme, Chief Minister Hemant Soren said the state has been “portrayed in a poor light by some”,** who are not aware of Jharkhand’s rich tribal culture.
- The scheme, which was **launched in Saraikela-Kharsawan, West Singhbhum, Khunti, Gumla and Simdega districts,** will be replicated in other districts as well. **Nineteen of the state’s 24 districts are affected by Left Wing Extremism.** According to the scheme, **boys and girls in the 14-19 age group from villages to ward level will be registered under the scheme,** and given opportunities to display their skills in basketball, volleyball, hockey and athletics.

Jharkhand (meaning ‘the land of forests’) is a state in eastern India. The state shares its border with the states of Bihar to the north, Uttar Pradesh to the northwest, Chhattisgarh to the west, Odisha to the south and West Bengal to the east. **The city of Ranchi is its capital and Dumka its sub-capital. Hemant Soren is the current Chief Minister of Jharkhand. Ramesh Bais is serving as the current Governor of Jharkhand. The state was formed on 15 November 2000, from the territory that had previously been part of Bihar.**

Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Index: West Bengal, Kerala top respective categories

- **West Bengal and Kerala were toppers in the large and small states categories respectively**, in the ‘**Index on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy**,’ released. The index is an **indicator of literacy among children below 10 years**. There are four categories in which regions have been divided – large states, small states, Union Territories and North East.
- **The report on the ‘Index on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy’ was prepared by ‘Institute for Competitiveness’ and released by Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) chairman Bibek Debroy.** It said the challenge of ensuring quality Foundational Literacy and Numeracy for all is daunting, yet not impossible to achieve. “The top-scoring regions are Kerala (67.95) and West Bengal (58.95) in small and large states, respectively,” the EAC-PM said in a statement.
- **Lakshadweep (52.69) and Mizoram (51.64) are top-scoring regions in the Union Territory and Northeast state category, respectively.** As far as worst performers are concerned, **Ladakh has featured at the bottom in the list of UTs, while Arunachal Pradesh came last in the North East category.**
- According to the statement, **the ‘Index on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy’ is the first step in this direction**, establishing an understanding of the overall state of Foundational Learning across children aged below ten years in Indian states and Union territories.
- **The Index includes five pillars comprising 41 indicators. The five pillars are – educational infrastructure, access to education, learning outcomes and governance.** The statement said out of the five pillars, it has been observed that states have performed particularly worse in governance.

India’s first food museum

- **Thanjavur now has a new site in town, India’s first food museum. Established by the Food Corporation of India**, this museum gives visitors a tour of agriculture, cuisines and food distribution systems in India.
- Using touch screens, virtual reality sets, projector screens and other interactables, visitors can journey through the **process of food cultivation in the country and better understand what goes on our plates.**

The **Food Corporation of India (FCI)** is a statutory corporation created and run by the Government of India. It is under the jurisdiction of **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India** formed by the enactment of **Food Corporation Act, 1964** by the Parliament of India. Its top official is designated as **Chairman** who is a **central government civil servant of the IAS cadre.** It was **set up in 1965 with its initial headquarters at Chennai. Later this was moved to New Delhi.** It also has regional centers in the capitals of the states. Important regions of the state also serve as district centers.

Union Cabinet approves Rs.76,000-crore push for semiconductor makers

- **The Union Cabinet approved a Rs.76,000 crore scheme to boost semiconductor and display manufacturing in the country**, taking the total amount of incentives announced for the electronics sector to Rs.2.30 lakh crore.
- The comprehensive programme for the “development of sustainable semiconductor and display ecosystem in the country” was **aimed at making India a global hub of electronic system design and manufacturing, the statement noted.**

UP government to launch ‘happiness curriculum’ in primary schools from next session

- On the lines of Chhattisgarh and Delhi, **preparations are underway to implement the ‘happiness curriculum’ in primary schools of Uttar Pradesh** under a pilot project to make the students more sensitive towards nature, society and the country.

- The course is being developed keeping in mind the geographical and cultural conditions of Uttar Pradesh. **The happiness curriculum will be introduced to the students of classes 1 to 8. It will enable them to connect with themselves, family, society, nature and the country.**

Delimitation Commission proposes six additional seats for Jammu, one for Kashmir valley

- **The draft paper of the Delimitation Commission has proposed seven additional Assembly seats for Jammu and Kashmir — six in Jammu division and one in Kashmir valley.** For the first time, the commission proposed reserving nine seats for Scheduled Tribes (STs) on the basis of population. Seven seats are proposed for the Scheduled Caste (SC) community.
- With the proposed addition, **the total Assembly constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir has risen to 90 — in Jammu, the number of seats has gone up to 43 from 37, and in Kashmir, by one seat to 47. An additional 24 seats are proposed to be reserved for Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).** It said that the 2011 census was the basis for carving out the new seats. According to the census, the population of the Kashmir division was 68.8 lakh and Jammu 53.5 lakh.
- **Jammu and Kashmir will now have a 90-member Legislative Assembly, up from the 87 prior to the Centre’s decision to end the special constitutional position of the erstwhile State.** This has triggered sharp reactions from the regional parties. **There is already a Supreme Court ruling granting a status quo regarding delimitation, if the commission prepares the draft based on 2011 census. It will be unconstitutional.**
- **After the abrogation of Jammu and Kashmir’s special status in 2019, the government set up the Delimitation Commission headed by retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai. The Delimitation Commission chaired by Justice (Retd.) Ranjana Prakash Desai met with a detailed presentation on the work done so far by Senior Deputy Election Commissioner Chandra Bhushan Kumar. Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra and J&K Election Commissioner KK Sharma are the two ex-officio members in the panel.**

Delimitation is the act of redrawing boundaries of Lok Sabha and Assembly constituencies to represent changes in population and is done on the basis of the preceding Census. This exercise is carried out by a Delimitation Commission, whose orders have the force of law and cannot be questioned before any court. Article 82 provides the Parliament with the authority to enact a Delimitation Act after every Census. Article 170 provides for the States to get divided into territorial constituencies as per the Delimitation Act after every Census. The Union government sets up a Delimitation Commission once the Act is in force. Delimitation Commission of India has been set up for four times till now-1952, 1963, 1971 and 2002. Delimitation exercises in J&K in the past have been slightly different from those in the rest of the country because of the region’s special status — which was scrapped by the Centre in August 2019. Until then, the delimitation of Lok Sabha seats in J&K was governed by the Constitution of India. But the delimitation of the state’s Assembly seats was governed by the Jammu and Kashmir Constitution and Jammu and Kashmir Representation of the People Act, 1957. Assembly seats in J&K were delimited in 1963, 1973 and 1995. The last exercise was conducted by the Justice (retired) KK Gupta Commission when the state was under President’s Rule and was based on the 1981 census, which formed the basis of the state elections in 1996. There was no census in the state in 1991 and no Delimitation Commission was set up by the state government after the 2001 census as the J&K Assembly passed a law putting a freeze on the fresh delimitation of seats until 2026. This freeze was upheld by the Supreme Court. The freeze, some political parties argue, has created inequity for the Jammu region.

PM Modi lays foundation stone of Ganga Expressway at Shahjahanpur in Uttar Pradesh

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the longest expressway of Uttar Pradesh Ganga Expressway in Shahjahanpur district. The 594 Km long six-lane Expressway will be built at a cost of over Rs 36,200 crore.** Starting near the Bijauli village in Meerut, the Expressway will extend till near the Judapur Dandu village in Prayagraj.
- It will pass through Meerut, Hapur, Bulandshahr, Amroha, Sambhal, Budaun, Shahjahanpur, Hardoi, Unnao, RaeBareilly, Pratapgarh and Prayagraj districts. **Upon completion of work, it will become the longest expressway of Uttar Pradesh, connecting the western and eastern regions of the state.**

- A 3.5-km long air strip for assisting emergency takeoff and landing of Air Force planes will also be constructed on the Expressway in Shahjahanpur, it said. An industrial corridor is also proposed to be built along the expressway.

India's first International Arbitration and Mediation Centre opened in Hyderabad

- India's first International Arbitration and Mediation Centre (IAMC) was jointly inaugurated by Chief Justice of India, N.V. Ramana, and Telangana Chief Minister, K. Chandrasekhar Rao in Hyderabad.
- The IAMC has come up with 25,000 sq ft temporary accommodation at VK Towers in Gachibowli, an information technology hub, Hyderabad. The state government has announced that land for a permanent building will be allotted at Puppalaguda in Hyderabad.
- Those who empanel the centre include internationally acclaimed arbitrators and mediators from countries such as Singapore and the UK. The Telangana Chief Minister thanked the CJI for choosing Hyderabad to set up the prestigious facility. IAMC has been established to quickly resolve the issues that arise due to the Lack of sufficient judges. IAMC will settle commercial disputes and it will also look into the disputes of ordinary people.
- Speaking on the occasion, Justice Ramana said he is confident that this centre will lead the way for arbitration and mediation in the country and will become the premier centre not only in India, but across Asia and the world.
- Ramana said that he is all for ADR (Alternate Dispute Resolution) as such methods are beneficial to the parties to a dispute due to various reasons such as low cost, speed, more control over timelines and process, autonomy of parties, more comfortable environment and non-adversarial nature. The CJI termed the creation of the centre as a tribute to former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, who saw ADR as the way forward.

Telangana is a state in India situated on the south-central stretch of the Indian peninsula on the high Deccan Plateau. On 2 June 2014, the area was separated from the northwestern part of Andhra Pradesh as the newly formed state with Hyderabad as its capital. It is a land locked state in India. Kalvakuntla Chandrashekhara Rao has been serving as the first and current Chief Minister of Telangana since 2014. Tamilisai Soundararajan is an Indian medical doctor serving as current Governor of Telangana.

Centre introduces Bill to link voter ID, Aadhaar cards amid protests by Opposition

- The Centre introduced the Election Laws (Amendment Bill) 2021 to link voter identity and Aadhaar cards, despite objections by the Opposition parties over the move. Law Minister Kiren Rijiju clarified that the Amendment was only meant to stop bogus and fraudulent voting.
- According to the statement of objects and reasons, the Bill aims to “curb the menace of multiple enrolment of the same person in different places”. The qualifying dates in relation to the preparation or revision of electoral rolls will be first days of January, April, July and October once the Bill becomes an act.
- “The Amendment of the Section 20 of the Representation of the People’s Act 1950 and Section 60 of the RP Act 1951 for substitution of the word “wide” with the word “spouse” making the statutes gender neutral,” it added. It provides for amendment of section 23 of the Representation of People’s Act, 1950, enabling the linking of electoral roll data with the Aadhaar ecosystem.
- The Opposition claimed that it would be a violation of the Constitutional rights of citizens and would violate their right to privacy if Aadhaar is connected to the electoral rolls. The Opposition demanded the rollback of the Bill. The Union Cabinet had earlier cleared the bill on electoral reforms. These reforms included the bill seeking to link the electoral roll with Aadhaar on a voluntary basis to root out multiple enrolments.

In 2015, the move to link voter ID to Aadhaar was put on the backburner after the Supreme Court Judgment. When it held that “the Aadhaar card Scheme is purely voluntary”. Besides this, Aadhaar was only meant to be proof of residence. It is not proof of citizenship. Electoral data at present is held by the Election Commission of India (ECI) in its own database, has its own verification process, and is separate from other government databases. The proposed linkage between the Aadhaar and election database will make data available to the ECI and Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI). This could lead to infringement of the privacy of citizens. On 24th August, 2017 a 9 Judge Bench of the Supreme Court delivered a unanimous verdict in Justice K.S. Puttaswamy vs. Union of India and other connected matters, affirming that the Constitution of India guarantees to each individual a fundamental right to privacy.

Jharkhand launches initiative to enable systemic registration of migrant workers

- The Jharkhand government launched the **Safe and Responsible Migration Initiative (SRMI)** to enable systemic registration of migrant workers for monitoring and analysis in the source as well as the destination districts. To begin with, the government will have two help desks—which will be known as ‘labour consulates’—in Ladakh Union Territory as well as in Kerala.
- The launch was followed by two panel discussions which focussed on tracking women labourers who remain the most vulnerable, putting an end to the exploitative means, predicting distress migration and increased social security and welfare coverage for migrant workers.

Tamil Nadu: CM Stalin declares ‘Tamil Thaa Vazhthu’ as state song

- The Tamil Nadu government announced ‘Tamil Thaa Vazhthu,’ an invocation sung in praise of Mother Tamil, as the state anthem and directed that all present during its rendition should remain standing. The decision comes in the wake of the Madras High Court recently ruling that ‘Tamil Thai Vazhthu’ is a prayer song and not an anthem.
- The ‘Tamil Thai Vazhthu,’ the invocation to mother Tamil enjoys official status since 1970 and the then Chief Minister, late M Karunanidhi-led DMK government had issued a Government Order as well in this regard. For over 50 years, it is sung ahead of the start of all official events including those held in state-run and aided educational institutions.

Tamil Nadu lies in the southernmost part of the Indian subcontinent and is bordered by the union territory of Puducherry and the South Indian states of Kerala, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh. Its capital and largest city is Chennai. Its official language is Tamil, which is one of the longest-surviving classical languages in the world. Ravindra Narayana Ravi is the current Governor of Tamil Nadu. M.K. Stalin is the current Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.

AIM, NITI Aayog & UNCDF announce first AgriTech cohort under South-South Innovation platform

- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) rolled out their first AgriTech Challenge cohort for its ambitious innovative Agri-tech program that aims to help smallholder farmers across Asia and Africa to address their challenges in the aftermath of the pandemic.
- AIM, NITI Aayog in partnership with UNCDF, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Rabo Foundation launched a South-South innovation platform to enable cross-border exchange of innovations, insights and investments in July this year 2021. Through this platform, cross-border collaborations among emerging markets across India, Indonesia, Malawi, Malaysia, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia would be enabled.
- For its first platform AgriTech Challenge Cohort and Agri-Fintech innovators, applications were invited to facilitate their expansion to the international markets through two tracks- Main track and AIM track. A total of 10 high-growth innovators have been selected in the Main track, out of a total 100 applications. The key objective of the main track applications was ‘Expansion – Support solution pilot in the chosen international market.’
- Speaking during the virtual announcement of the cohort, VC, NITI Aayog Dr. Rajiv Kumar, said “In India, more than 50% of the population is dependent on agriculture and it contributes to about 15-18% of the GDP. As agriculture is a sector that emotionally appeals the masses, Indian agencies are prompted to undertake policy measures to stimulate industry landscape. We at NITI Aayog are leaving no stone unturned to improve the agriculture sectoral landscape and we will continue till the milestones are achieved and beyond.”

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog is Government of India’s flagship initiative to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the country and was setup in 2016. Towards this end AIM has taken a holistic approach to ensure creation of a problem-solving innovative mindset in schools and creating an ecosystem of entrepreneurship in universities, research institutions, private and MSME sector. All the initiatives of AIM are currently monitored and managed systematically using real-time MIS systems and dynamic dashboards. AIM is

also currently having its programs reviewed by third party agencies for ensuring continuous improvements. **With a vision to ‘Cultivate one Million children in India as Neoteric Innovators’, Atal Innovation Mission is establishing Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATLs) in schools across India.** The objective of this scheme is to foster curiosity, creativity, and imagination in young minds; and inculcate skills such as design mindset, computational thinking, adaptive learning, physical computing etc.

KAPILA Campaign

- The government of India has **launched a campaign namely Kalam Program for Intellectual Property Literacy and Awareness Campaign (KAPILA) to increase awareness regarding protection and exploitation of Intellectual Property (IP) and also to provide funding support in order to promote filing of the Intellectual Property (IP) in Higher Education Institutions.**
- A **KAPILA portal** has also been **launched for this purpose.** Under the initiative, activities like **IP Clinic, Case Studies/ Articles regarding Innovation and Intellectual Property** and online awareness programs and National Intellectual Property Literacy Week (NIPLW) have been conducted. More than 46,000 users have registered for KAPILA awareness programs.
- **KAPILA Awareness Program aims to provide funding support in order to promote the filing of Intellectual Property (IP) in Higher Education Institutions.** KAPILA Portal has been launched for the same. To create awareness regarding Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), To enable IP protection of inventions originating from faculty and students of HEIs, Development of Credit Course on IPR, Training program on IPR for faculty and students of HEIs and Sensitization and development of vibrant IP filing system.

GIS based ‘Automatic Water Supply System’, first of its kind in the country launched

- The GIS based ‘Automatic Water Supply System’ for citizens of Cantonment Boards was recently launched by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on the occasion of Defence Estates Day 2021.
- The module of GIS based Water Supply system for Cantonment Boards has been developed by Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Applications and Geo informatics (BISAG) under the guidance of Defence Secretary and Director General of Defence Estates, Delhi.
- It is completely automated which **provides facility to its citizen to identify the location of water supply connection.** It automatically determines nearest water pipeline. **This GIS system is first of its kind in the country.** It is based on ‘minimum government’. It supports the concept of ‘maximum governance’ as there is no manual intervention for clearance or sanction of the water connection. **BISAG has successfully implemented the GIS module and its integration with the e-Chhawani portal is done by Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).**

HADR exercise PANEX-21 in Pune

- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh witnessed a Multi-Agency Exercise (MAE) and inaugurated an equipment display on the second day of PANEX-21, a Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise for BIMSTEC member nations, organised at College of Military Engineering in Pune, Maharashtra.
- The exercise is being attended by delegates and subject matter experts from India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand.
- Shri Rajnath Singh termed BIMSTEC as **one of the most important and closely-knit group of countries** which has the potential to build a symbiotic partnership amongst like-minded nations by strengthening existing civilisational bonds. Lauding the member nations for standing by each other during natural calamities, he said, the PANEX-21 provides a fresh impetus for creating a more cohesive mechanism to respond to the HADR challenges in the region.
- **The main aim of the exercise is to build regional cooperation in responding to natural disasters.** The equipment display, organized in association with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), is aimed to showcase the niche industrial capabilities and capacities of the Indian industry on disaster relief operations.

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is an international organisation of seven South Asian and Southeast Asian nations, housing 1.73 billion people and having a combined gross domestic product of \$3.8 trillion (2021). The BIMSTEC member states – Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand– are among the countries dependent on the Bay of Bengal. Fourteen priority sectors of cooperation have been identified and several BIMSTEC centres have been established to focus on those sectors. A BIMSTEC free trade agreement is under negotiation (c. 2018), also referred to as the mini SAARC. Leadership is rotated in alphabetical order of country names. The permanent secretariat is in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

NITI Aayog enters into agreement with UN WFP to diversify food basket in programmes

- Aiming at a more diversified food basket under its free food distribution programme with focus on coarse grains and millets, NITI Aayog has entered into an agreement with United Nations World Food Program (WFP) to address issues related to inclusion of millets in government programmes.
- Under the statement of intent signed between the Aayog and the United Nations World Food Program (WFP), the focus will be on mainstreaming millets and strengthening of climate resilient agriculture for enhanced food and nutrition security in India.
- The government of India had observed 2018 as a year of millets to encourage and promote millet production in India and declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets, in line with the United Nations General Assembly resolution.

The World Food Programme (WFP) is the food-assistance branch of the United Nations. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization, the largest one focused on hunger and food security, and the largest provider of school meals. Founded in 1961, it is headquartered in Rome and has offices in 80 countries. The World Food Programme was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2020 for its efforts to provide food assistance in areas of conflict, and to prevent the use of food as a weapon of war and conflict.

Odisha CM inaugurates State's longest bridge 'T-Setu' over Mahanadi

- Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated T-Setu, the State's longest bridge over Mahanadi in Cuttack district. The 3.4 km long bridge, connecting Gopinathpur in Badamba, Baideswar in Banki to Singhanath Pitha located in the middle of the river, has been built in the shape of English alphabet 'T' at a cost of Rs 111 crore.
- The bridge, which has a footpath of 1.5 metre width on its both sides, will benefit people of Cuttack and Khurda and reduce the distance between Badamba and Baideswar in Banki by 45 km. The 7.5 metre wide bridge will facilitate communication for around five lakh people of the nearby localities besides improving agriculture, business and tourism activities in and around the area. It will also benefit devotees visiting Baba Singhanath's Bali Makar Jatra in Badamba block. Every year, the State government builds a 3-km long fair weather road (pedestrian track) on the Mahanadi river bed at a cost of Rs 14- Rs15 lakh to facilitate communication for devotees.

The modern state of Odisha was established on 1 April 1936, as a province in British India. The ancient kingdom of Kalinga, which was invaded by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka in 261 BCE resulting in the Kalinga War, coincides with the borders of modern-day Odisha. Konark Sun Temple is a 13th-century CE sun temple at Konark about 35 kilometres northeast from Puri on the coastline of Odisha, India. The temple is attributed to king Narasimhadeva I of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty about 1250 CE. Ganeshi Lal is current Governor of Odisha. Naveen Patnaik is the current and 14th Chief Minister of Odisha.

PM Narendra Modi launched multiple development initiatives in Varanasi

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Varanasi and kickstart multiple development initiatives. During his visit, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of 'Banas Dairy Sankul' at Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority Food Park at Karkhiyaon in Varanasi.

- He also laid the foundation stone for the Bio-gas based Electricity generation plant for the Milk Producers Cooperative Union Plant at Ramnagar in Varanasi. It will be a key step towards making Milk Producers Cooperative Union Plant energy self-sufficient.
- The Prime Minister also launched a Portal and a logo dedicated to the Conformity Assessment Scheme of milk products, developed by the Bureau of Indian Standards with the help of National Dairy Development Board. To reduce the land ownership issues at grass root level, the Prime Minister virtually distributed the rural residential rights record 'Gharauni' under the Swamitva scheme to over 20 Lakh residents of the state.
- The Prime Minister inaugurated multiple urban development projects in Varanasi and projects in the education sector. These include the Union Education Ministry's Inter-University Centre for Teachers Education, built at a cost of around 107 crore rupees and a Teachers Education Centre at Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies.
- A hostel for doctors, one for nurses and a shelter home amounting to 130 crore rupees at the Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya Cancer Centre was inaugurated by the Prime Minister among other projects.
- PM Modi also laid the foundation stone of two 4 to 6 lane road widening projects for Prayagraj and Bhadohi roads, which will improve the connectivity of Varanasi. To give fillip to tourism potential of the holy city, the Prime Minister will also inaugurate the Phase-1 of Tourism Development project related to Shri Guru Ravidas Ji Temple, Seer Govardhan, Varanasi.
- Other projects being inaugurated by the Prime Minister include a Speed Breeding Facility at International Rice Research Institute, South Asia Regional Centre Varanasi, a Regional Reference Standards Laboratory at village Payakpur and an Advocate building at Tehsil Pindra

Varanasi also known as Kashi or Benares, or Banaras is a city on the banks of the river Ganges in Uttar Pradesh. A major religious hub in India, it is the holiest of the seven sacred cities in Hinduism and Jainism, and played an important role in the development of Buddhism and Ravidassia. Varanasi lies along National Highway 2, and is served by Varanasi Junction railway station and Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport. The city is represented in the Parliament of India by the current Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi, who won the Lok Sabha elections in 2014 and 2019 by a huge margin.

Indian Army launches contemporary messaging app 'ASIGMA'

- Indian Army launched a contemporary messaging application named ASIGMA. ASIGMA stands for Army Secure Indigenous Messaging Application. It is a new generation, state-of-the-art, web based application developed entirely in-house by team of officers of the Corps of Signals of the Army.
- The application is being deployed on the Army's internal network as a replacement of Army Wide Area Network messaging application which has been in service for past the 15 years. The application has been fielded on Army owned hardware. It meets all futuristic user requirements and provides enhanced user experience. It has a variety of contemporary features including multi-level security, message prioritisation and tracking.
- This future ready messaging application will meet real time data transfer and messaging requirements of the Army, especially in the backdrop of current geo political security environment. It is in line with the Government's Make in India initiative.

The Indian Army is the land-based branch and the largest component of the Indian Armed Forces. The President of India is the Supreme Commander of the Indian Army, and its professional head is the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), who is a four-star general. Two officers have been conferred with the rank of field marshal, a five-star rank, which is a ceremonial position of great honour. The Indian Army originated from the armies of the East India Company, which eventually became the British Indian Army, and the armies of the princely states, which were merged into the national army after independence. General Bipin Rawat is the first and current Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) of India. General Manoj Mukund Naravane is the current and 28th Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) as well as the temporary Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee since 15 December 2021.

Niti Aayog launches Vernacular Innovation Program for innovators, entrepreneurs to access innovative ecosystem in 22 languages

- **Atal Innovation Mission, Niti Aayog launched the first of its kind Vernacular Innovation Program** which enables innovators and entrepreneurs to have access to the innovative ecosystem in 22 mother tongue languages.
- By providing access to learning in one's language and culture, Atal Innovation Mission aims to create equal opportunity for the vernacular innovators. **To build the necessary capacity for the Vernacular Innovation Program, VIP Atal Innovation Mission has identified and will be training a Vernacular Task Force in each of the 22 scheduled languages.** Each task force comprises vernacular language teachers, subject experts, technical writers, and the leadership of regional Atal Incubation Centres.

Govt notifies new semiconductor policy

- **The Government notified the semiconductor policy** which was cleared by the Cabinet. According to the gazette notification, the government will **provide up to 50% of Project cost for two semiconductor and two display fabs in the country.**
- The Application window starts January 1 and will be open for 45 days. **Support under the scheme shall be provided on pari-passu basis for a period of six years.**
- **Design Linked Incentive (DLI) scheme shall offer financial incentives as well as design infrastructure support across various stages of development and deployment of semiconductor design for Integrated Circuits (ICs), Chipsets, System on Chips (SoCs), over a period of 5 years and will nurture close to 100 domestic companies of semiconductor design and facilitate growth of not less than 20 such companies to achieve turnover of more than Rs.1500 Crore in the next 5 years.**

Semiconductors possess specific electrical properties. A substance that conducts electricity is called a conductor, and a substance that does not conduct electricity is called an insulator. Semiconductors are substances with properties somewhere between them. ICs (integrated circuits) and electronic discrete components such as diodes and transistors are made of semiconductors. **Common elemental semiconductors are silicon and germanium.** Silicon is well-known of these. **Silicon forms most of ICs.** Common semiconductor compounds are such as gallium arsenide or indium antimonide. Semiconductors became essential for many electronic appliances as well as for social infrastructure that support our everyday life.

First in country, ECI to increase voting time by 1 hr in Uttarakhand due to terrain

- **Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra said the polling time will be enhanced by an hour for assembly elections in Uttarakhand considering the state's difficult terrain.** He said it will be the first such move in the country as the terrain in many areas of the state makes it difficult for the voters to reach polling booths. Chandra said the polling will be held from 8 am to 6 pm in Uttarakhand, where elections are due early next year.
- **The Supreme Court in February 2020 mandated political parties to have the criminal history of their candidates published** along with the reasons for fielding people facing serious charges. The information has to be published within 48 hours of the candidate selection or under a fortnight before the beginning of the filing of nominations.

Uttarakhand is often referred to as the Devbhumi, due to many Hindu temples and pilgrimage centres found throughout the state. **On 9 November 2000, Uttarakhand became the 27th state of the Republic of India, being created from the Himalayan and adjoining northwestern districts of Uttar Pradesh.** Trivendra Singh Rawat served as the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand till March 10, 2021. Mr Pushkar Singh Dhama is serving as the current Chief Minister of Uttarakhand since March 10, 2021. Baby Rani Maurya is serving as the current governor of Uttarakhand since 26 August 2018. **The winter capital of Uttarakhand is Dehradun, the largest city of the state, which is a rail head. Gairsain, a town in Chamoli district is the summer capital of Uttarakhand. The High Court of the state is located in Nainital.**

Maharashtra clears Shakti law unanimously

- The Maharashtra Assembly unanimously cleared the Shakti Criminal Laws (Maharashtra Amendment) Bill, 2020 on crimes against women and children. The legislation recommends capital punishment in rape cases, a time limit of 30 days to complete the probe from the day of registering the complaint, and places the onus on social media platforms and Internet data providing companies to share data for the police investigation.

NMCG and TERI launch Centre of Excellence on Water Reuse

- Director General of National Mission for Clean Ganga, NMCG and Director General of The Energy and Resources Institute, TERI launched Centre of Excellence, CoE on Water Reuse in New Delhi. The CoE on Water Reuse is the first of its kind to be established in the country through a collaboration between NMCG and TERI.
- The Centre is a quadripartite alliance between NMCG, TERI, industry partners and industry representative bodies, to come up at the TERI campus in Gwal Pahari, Gurugram, will be meeting the objectives of the Ganga Knowledge Centre (GKC) to design and foster research and innovation, including identification of knowledge gaps for research and need for new ideas, supporting targeted research and spurring and nurturing needed innovation e.g. for low-cost, effective and integrated treatment technologies, which could bridge the current treatment gaps, augment capacities and provide safe treated water for reuse.

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) is a research institute in New Delhi that specializes in the fields of energy, environment and sustainable development. Established in 1974, it was formerly known as the Tata Energy Research Institute. As the scope of its activities widened, it was renamed The Energy and Resources Institute in 2003.

Centre forms panel, headed by Vivek Joshi, to study AFSPA removal from Nagaland

- The ministry of home affairs set up a high-level committee, headed by Vivek Joshi, a secretary-rank officer, to look into the possibility of withdrawing the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act from Nagaland in the wake of rising tension in the state over the killing of 14 civilians. The committee was set up three days after Union home minister Amit Shah held a meeting with Nagaland chief minister Neiphiu Rio and his Assam counterpart Himanta Biswa Sarma over the matter in Delhi.
- The new committee will look into the possibility of the withdrawal of the AFSPA in Nagaland, where it has been operational for decades, and a decision will be taken on the basis of its recommendations. The controversial Act gives sweeping powers to the armed forces to conduct operations and arrest anyone without any prior warrant. It also gives immunity to the forces if they shoot someone dead.
- Meanwhile, officials said that disciplinary action is also likely to be taken against the Army personnel, who were directly involved in the botched counter-insurgency operation in Nagaland's Mon district in early December, after a fair inquiry. Protests have been going on in several districts of Nagaland demanding withdrawal of the AFSPA, ever since an Army unit killed the 14 civilians in Mon mistaking them as insurgents.

Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), 1958 is an act of the Parliament of India that grants special powers to the Indian Armed Forces to maintain public order in "disturbed areas". According to the Disturbed Areas (Special Courts) Act, 1976 once declared 'disturbed', the area has to maintain status quo for a minimum of 6 months. One such act passed on 11 September 1958 was applicable to the Naga Hills, then part of Assam. In the following decades it spread, one by one, to the other Seven Sister States in India's northeast (at present, it is in force in the States of Assam, Nagaland, Manipur {excluding Imphal Municipal Council Area}, Changlang, Longding and Tirap districts of Arunachal Pradesh, and areas falling within the jurisdiction of the eight police stations of districts in Arunachal Pradesh bordering the State of Assam). Another one passed in 1983 and applicable to Punjab and Chandigarh was withdrawn in 1997, roughly 14 years after it came to force. An act passed in 1990 was applied to Jammu and Kashmir and has been in force since.

AFSPA extended in Nagaland for 6 months

- The government of India said that the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act 1958 (AFSPA) extended in Nagaland for six more months with effect from December 30, 2021. The Central government declared the entire Nagaland as a "disturbed area."

- As per the Ministry of Home Affairs statement, “whereas the Central Government is of the opinion that the area comprising the whole state of Nagaland is in such a disturbed and dangerous condition that use of armed forces in aid of civil power is necessary.”
- Now, therefore, in exercise of powers conferred by Section 3 of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958, the Central Government hereby declares that the whole of the state of Nagaland to be ‘disturbed area’ for a period of six months with effect from December 30, 2021 for the purpose of the said Act, it further stated.
- The move came days after the Union government constituted a high-level committee to examine the possibility of the withdrawal of the controversial Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act from Nagaland. The AFSPA has been operational in Nagaland for decades.
- The notification was issued by the additional secretary in the Home Ministry, Piyush Goyal, who has been named the member secretary in the panel to examine the possibility of the withdrawal of the AFSPA. The committee is headed by secretary-level officer Vivek Joshi. The high-level committee has been set up apparently to soothe the rising tension in Nagaland over the killing of 14 civilians.

Nagaland is a state in northeastern India. It is bordered by the state of Arunachal Pradesh to the north, Assam to the west, Manipur to the south and the Sagaing Region of Myanmar to the east. Its capital city is Kohima and its largest city is Dimapur. Nagaland became the 16th state of India on 1 December 1963. It has experienced insurgency and inter-ethnic conflict since the 1950s, limiting its economic development. Neiphiu Rio is the current Chief Minister of Nagaland. The current Governor of Nagaland is Jagdish Mukhi (additional charge) from September 17, 2021.

Nitin Gadkari launches intelligent transport system on Eastern Peripheral Expressway

- In an attempt to to minimize traffic woes and enhance safety of commuters, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari launched the first Intelligent Transport System on Eastern Peripheral Expressway at Dasna, Ghaziabad.
- The ITS can detect any accident and receive alerts to ensure that ambulance reaches the spot within 10-15 minutes. While the speed limit on the 135-km expressway is 120 kmph for cars, the road ministry is working to revise speed limits for different categories of vehicles, he said. Additionally, the Union minister laid the foundation stone of National Highway projects of 240 Km worth ₹ 9,119 crore in Meerut and Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh.
- Inaugurating and laying of the foundation stone for 6 National Highway projects in Meerut with a total cost of Rs.8,364 crore Gadkari said, “with these projects, it will be easy for the farmers of the area to take their crops to the market, which will lead to their economic upliftment. He said being a big center of industry, these new highways will lead Meerut on a new path of development”.

Nitin Jairam Gadkari was served as the President of the BJP from 2010-2013. He is the current Minister for Road Transport & Highways of India. Gadkari represents Lok Sabha from Nagpur constituency, Maharashtra. During the cabinet reshuffle on 7th July 2021 the portfolio for Ministry of MSME which was under him was reassigned to Narayan Rane, another BJP MP from Maharashtra as a part of cabinet expansion.

Amit Shah launches Good Governance Index 2021; Gujarat tops, UP shows ‘incremental growth’

- Gujarat has topped the composite ranking in the Good Governance Index (GGI), followed by Maharashtra and Goa while Uttar Pradesh showed an incremental growth of 8.9 per cent in the indicators launched by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on the occasion of the Good Governance Day.
- As many as 20 states have improved their composite GGI scores in 2021, according to the index. Gujarat topped the composite ranking in the 58 indicator index followed by Maharashtra and Goa.
- Delhi has topped the union territories category composite ranking. December 25 is observed as the good governance day to commemorate the birth anniversary of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- The GGI-2021 said that Gujarat, Maharashtra and Goa topped the composite rank score covering 10 sectors. While Gujarat registered a 12.3 per cent increase, Goa registered a 24.7 per cent increase over GGI 2019 indicators.

- Gujarat has performed strongly in economic governance, human resource development, public infrastructure and utilities, social welfare and development, judiciary and public safety while Maharashtra scored in agriculture and allied sector, human resource development, public infrastructure and utilities, social welfare and development.
- Goa's showed good performance was in agriculture and allied sector, commerce and industry, public infrastructure and utilities, economic governance, social welfare and development and environment. Among the sectors, Uttar Pradesh secured top position in commerce and industry sector and has also shown an increase in social welfare and development and judiciary and public safety.

The GGI 2021 framework covered 10 sectors and 58 indicators. The sectors are agriculture and allied sectors, commerce and industries, human resource development, public health, public infrastructure and utilities, economic governance, social welfare and development, judicial and public security, environment and citizen-centric governance. The GGI 2020-21 categorises states and union territories into four categories, - other states - Group A; other states - group B; North-East and hill states and union territories.

Agriculture Minister stresses on infrastructure development in agriculture sector; inaugurates 4-day agriculture exhibition 'Agrovision'

- Minister of Agriculture, Narendra Singh Tomar has said that, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, agriculture is being given priority and 1 lakh 62 thousand crore rupees have been provided to 11.5 crore farmers in the country under PM Kisan Yojana.
- He inaugurated the four-day agriculture exhibition 'Agrovision', in Nagpur, Maharashtra. Union Minister Nitin Gadkari was also present on this occasion. Stressing upon the infrastructure development in the agriculture sector Mr. Tomar expressed the need for private sector investment in the sector.
- He informed that the central government had sanctioned One lakh crore rupees for infra-structural funding in the agriculture sector under the 'Aatmanirbhar' package. Under this, facilities like ware house, cold chain storage are being constructed at village level and farmers are getting the benefit. He also appealed to the farmers to turn towards organic farming.
- Union Minister Gadkari said that the cost of imports on petroleum and fuel is over 10,000 crore. To overcome this, Bio-ethanol is needed which is an environment friendly and cost-effective fuel. Mr Gadkari said that 100 per cent ethanol-powered vehicles would give farmers the opportunity to set up bio- ethanol. He also appealed to the farmers to avail the facilities of state government schemes, veterinary clinics and embryo lab in Nagpur to achieve the target of 50 lakh liters of milk production in Vidarbha.

The agriculture contribution in India's GDP in 2019 is 15.96 percent. According to latest report, agriculture is primary source of livelihood for 58% population in India. The Primary sector of the economy includes any industry involved in the extraction and production of raw materials, such as farming, logging, hunting, fishing, and mining. India is a global agricultural powerhouse. It is the world's largest producer of milk, pulses, and spices, and has the world's largest cattle herd (buffaloes), as well as the largest area under wheat, rice and cotton. It is the second largest producer of rice, wheat, cotton, sugarcane, farmed fish, sheep & goat meat, fruit, vegetables and tea. Narendra Singh Tomar is the Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare. He is a member of the 17th Lok Sabha from Morena, Madhya Pradesh.

Kerala best State on health parameters, Uttar Pradesh worst: NITI Aayog

- Kerala remained the best-performing state in the health indicators for a fourth consecutive time, according to an index released, which also ranked Uttar Pradesh at the bottom of the rankings although the state also saw the most progress.
- "The Healthy States, Progressive India" report — compiled by the Niti Aayog, Union Health Ministry and the World Bank for a fourth edition between 2019-2020 — surveyed 19 large states, eight small states and seven Union Territories. It did not include West Bengal and Ladakh due to unavailability of adequate data.
- Among large states, Kerala and Tamil Nadu topped the list, and Telangana emerged strong on the third position in health outcomes and incremental performance. The state saw an improvement from the 4th position

the last time — indicating that it has made strides in improving its health infrastructure by ensuring universal immunisation of children, setting up fully functional First Referral Units (FRUs) and all Primary Health Centres (PHCs) among others.

- **Maharashtra retained its fifth spot, and Andhra Pradesh fourth, down from 3rd in the last index. UP was ranked the lowest at 19**, but it has seen major improvements in 33 health indicators in recent years.
- **“Uttar Pradesh with the lowest Overall Reference Year (2019-20) Index Score ranked at the bottom (Rank 19) in Overall Performance, however, it ranked at the top in terms of Incremental Performance by registering the highest incremental change from the Base Year (2018-19) to Reference Year (2019-20),”** the report said.
- **Like UP, Assam too was placed at the bottom of the list but it has also seen improvements in health indices.** It moved up from 15th to the 12th position in the latest report, with progress in criteria such as mortality rate and maternal mortality rate.
- **Among small states, Mizoram emerged as the best performer and Nagaland the worst.** Delhi and Jammu & Kashmir were ranked the lowest among Union Territories in overall performance, but topped the list in incremental performance. Both have improved by one spot from the last edition of the survey.
- **The report also pointed out that among the large states, the gap between the best and the worst performers declined this year as compared to the 2018-19 index. Kerala got a score of 82.2 and UP, 30.57** — a difference of 51.63 points, which was improvement from a difference of 56.54 points from the previous index.
- The survey ranked states on **indicators such as neonatal mortality rate, under-five mortality rate, sex ratio at birth, maternal mortality ratio, modern contraception prevalence rate, full immunisation coverage, antenatal care, identification and cure of TB, etc.**

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is an Indian government ministry charged with health policy in India. It is also responsible for all government programs relating to family planning in India. The Minister of Health and Family Welfare holds cabinet rank as a member of the Council of Ministers. The current minister is Mansukh L. Mandaviya, while the current MOS health is Dr Bharati Pawar. Since 1955 the Ministry regularly publishes the Indian Pharmacopoeia through the Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC), an autonomous body for setting standards for drugs, pharmaceuticals and healthcare devices and technologies in India. Rajkumari Bibiji Amrit Kaur is the first Health Minister of India in 1947 and remained in office until 1957.

Andhra seals top rank in Good Governance Index, credits farmer welfare schemes

- The Andhra Pradesh government has credited farmer welfare schemes for the state's No. 1 rank in agriculture and allied sectors in the Good Governance Index 2021 by recording 11.3% growth over the last two years. Andhra Pradesh topped the composite ranking in the agriculture and allied sectors in the index. Union home minister Amit Shah released the Good Governance Index 2021.
- In a statement, special chief secretary (agriculture) Poonam Malakondaiah said the growth rate in the agriculture and allied sectors was 6.3% in 2019. “The growth in the horticulture produce went up from 4.7% to 12.3% in the last two years and growth in the dairy sector increased from 1.4% to 11.7%.” The statement said in crop insurance implementation, the state scored 26.1 out of 30 points.
- Malakondaiah said the government has set up the Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBKs) as one-point-facilitation centres at 10,778 locations in the state. She added as a result farmers are able to get all the seeds, fertilisers, animal, feed fish feed, and all other inputs that they require in their villages. Malakondaiah said crops are insured free-of-cost and linked to e-crop at the RBKs, where all the farmers get registered and their claims are settled. “The RBKs have received recognition from NITI Aayog and also the agriculture ministry.”

Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to have Five Deputy Chief Ministers one each from Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, backward, minority and Kapu communities. YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is the current Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to have three capital cities; there are Visakhapatnam (Executive capital), Amaravati (Legislative capital) and Kurnool (Judiciary). Andhra Pradesh High Court imposed a stay on implementation of 3 capitals. In November 2021, Andhra Pradesh government has withdrawn the three capitals bill in the assembly. Andhra Pradesh is the first state to be formed on a

linguistic basis in India on 1 October 1953. On 2 June 2014, Telangana was separated from the northwestern part of Andhra Pradesh as the newly formed state with Hyderabad as its capital.

PM Modi laid foundation of Rs 6,700-crore dam in Himachal Pradesh

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation of the Rs 6,700-crore Renukaji Dam project from Himachal Pradesh's Mandi town.
- The project on the Giri River in Sirmour district, once completed, is expected to generate 200 million units of energy in a surface power house with 40 MW installed capacity which would be utilized by the state. The Himachal Pradesh government claims that the storage capacity of the dam would be 498 million cubic meters which would fulfill about 40 per cent of the drinking water requirement of Delhi.
- The construction of the dam has been pending since the last three decades, a statement by the Central government informed. It finally takes shape following cooperation on behalf of six states — Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand and Delhi.

Himachal Pradesh ("Province of the Snow-laden Mountains") is a state in the northern part of India. Situated in the Western Himalayas, it is one of the eleven mountain states and is characterized by an extreme landscape featuring several peaks and extensive river systems. Himachal Pradesh is the northernmost state of India and shares borders with the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh to the north, and the states of Punjab to the west, Haryana to the southwest, Uttarakhand to the southeast and a very narrow border with Uttar Pradesh to the South. The state also shares an international border to the east with the Tibet Autonomous Region in China. Himachal Pradesh is also known as 'Dev Bhoomi' or 'Land of God' and 'Veer Bhoomi' which means 'Land of Braves'. Shimla is the capital of Himachal Pradesh. In 1864, Shimla was declared as the summer capital of British India. Dharamshala is the winter capital city. Jai Ram Thakur currently serves as the Chief Minister of the state and Rajendra Arlekar is the current Governor of Himachal Pradesh.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated completed section of Kanpur Metro Rail and Bina-Panki Multiproduct Pipeline

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Kanpur and inaugurated the completed section of Kanpur Metro Rail Project. During the programme, the Prime Minister also inaugurated the Bina-Panki Multiproduct Pipeline Project.
- The completed section of the Kanpur Metro Rail Project is 9 Km long section from IIT Kanpur to Moti Jheel. The Prime Minister will inspect the Kanpur Metro Rail Project and undertake a metro ride. The entire length of the Metro Rail Project in Kanpur is 32 Km and is being built at a cost of over 11,000 crore rupees.
- The Prime Minister also inaugurated the Bina-Panki Multiproduct Pipeline Project. Extending from Bina refinery in Madhya Pradesh to Panki in Kanpur, the 356 KM long project has a capacity of around 3.45 million metric tonne per annum. The project has been built at a cost of over 1500 crore rupees.
- Prior to this, the Prime Minister was the Chief Guest of the 54th Convocation of IIT Kanpur. During the convocation, all the students were issued digital degrees through an in-house blockchain-driven technology developed at the Institute under the National Blockchain Project. These digital degrees can be verified globally and are unforgeable.

India to chair counter terrorism committee of UNSC in Jan 2022 after ten years

- India will chair the Counter-Terrorism Committee of UNSC in January 2022 after 10 years. This Committee was formed in September 2001 soon after the tragic terrorist attack of 9/11 in New York, while India had chaired this Committee in the Security Council in 2011-12.
- The Counter-Terrorism Committee was established by Security Council resolution 1373 adopted unanimously in the wake of the 9/11 terror attacks in the US. The Committee was tasked with monitoring implementation of resolution 1373 which requested countries to implement a number of measures aimed at enhancing their legal and institutional ability to counter terrorist activities at home and around the world.

- In 2021, India has been asked to Chair three important Committees of the Security Council, which include the Taliban Sanctions Committee, Counterterrorism Committee, and the Libyan Sanctions Committee.
- TS Tirumurti, India's permanent representative to the United Nations was named the new Chair of the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC). Prior to taking up his current position as Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, in May 2020, Mr Tirumurti served as Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, handling the Economic Relations portfolio (which included, inter alia, the Gulf and the Arab World, Africa, and India's Development Partnership), according to UNSC statement.

United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations. Under the Charter, the Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It has 15 Members, and each Member has one vote. Under the Charter, all Member States are obligated to comply with Council decisions. The permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (also known as the Permanent Five, Big Five, or P5) are China (formerly the Republic of China), Russia (formerly the Soviet Union), France, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Antonio Guterres is a Portuguese politician and diplomat who is serving as the ninth Secretary-General of the United Nations. Previously, he was the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees between 2005 and 2015.

CESL achieves 50 lakhs LED bulb distribution milestone under flagship Gram Ujala

- Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL), a wholly owned subsidiary of Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), has achieved a remarkable milestone of distributing 50 lakhs LED bulbs under Project Crore of their Gram Ujala programme.
- Gram Ujala scheme is being implemented in rural households in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Telangana. CESL is providing high quality 7-Watt and 12-Watt LED bulbs with 3 years guarantee at a cost of INR 10 per bulb in exchange of working incandescent bulbs. Every household can exchange a maximum of 5 bulbs.
- The distribution has resulted in energy savings of 71,99,68,373.28 units per year with cost savings of 250 crores per year in the rural areas of aforementioned states. The programme is active till March 31, 2022.

Gram Ujala was launched by the Union minister of power and new and renewable energy RK Singh in March 2021, in an attempt to raise awareness against climate change and to save electricity. "The move will save 2025 million kilowatt of energy per year," Singh said during the launch of the scheme. Under the initiative, LED bulbs will be distributed at a highly subsidised rate at Rs. 10 across 2,579 villages in five states of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka. Residents can buy a maximum of 5 LED bulbs by paying for old 100 watts bulbs. The government will also install meters at these houses. The Ujala scheme is being implemented by EESL, a joint venture of leading PSUs under the administration of the ministry of power.

IIT Madras tops in Atal innovation rankings

- The Ministry of Education's innovation cell released the Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA) 2021 on December 29. ARIIA 2021 classifies participating institutions into two major categories; technical and non-technical.
- In the technical ranking, the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) has been recognised as the Most Innovative Educational Institute in India. This is the third time that IIT Madras has secured the first rank. IIT Bombay and IIT Delhi were placed at the second and third ranks respectively.
- Seven Indian Institutes of Technology and Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, are among the top 10 central institutions in promotion and support of innovation and entrepreneurship development, according to Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA) announced.
- The top rank has been bagged by IIT Madras followed by IIT Bombay, IIT Delhi, IIT Kanpur and IIT Roorkee. IISc Bengaluru has bagged the sixth position in the ranking followed by IIT Hyderabad, IIT Kharagpur, National Institute of Technology (NIT), Calicut and Motilal Nehru National Institute of Technology, Uttar Pradesh.

- **ARIIA is an initiative of the Ministry of Education (MoE) to systematically rank all major higher educational institutions in India** on indicators related to innovation, start-up and entrepreneurship development among students and faculties.

AIM and NITI Aayog releases 2nd edition of ‘Innovations for You’ and ‘The Ingenious Tinkerers’

- **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and NITI Aayog released the second edition of Innovations for You and The Ingenious Tinkerers.**
- **Innovations for You are a compendium of innovations focused on agriculture featuring 70 start-ups supported by Atal Incubation Centres of Atal Innovation Mission. The Ingenious Tinkerers is a compendium on the innovations in technology featuring 41 innovations from Atal Tinkering Lab.**
- **As the nation rejoices the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav – 75th Year of Independence, both the books are celebration of the success stories of young innovators of India. The ‘Innovations For You’ is a compilation of successful innovations by the entrepreneurial minds of India solving problems of present for future, while as ‘The Ingenious Tinkerers’ is a compilation of the top innovations created by young student innovators who participated in the ATL Marathon - which invites school students to address a problem that they see or face on a day-to-day basis.**
- **Meanwhile, the ‘Innovations For You’ in its second edition, focuses on the startups and innovations in field of Agriculture and Allied services. The book is a compilation of 70 Ag-Tech startups, incubated at Atal Incubation Centres spread across the country.**

The **National Institution for Transforming India**, also called **NITI Aayog**, was formed via a resolution of the **Union Cabinet on January 1, 2015**. It was established to replace the **Planning Commission** which followed a top-down model. **NITI Aayog is the premier policy ‘Think Tank’ of the Government of India**, providing both directional and policy inputs. The **current chairman of NITI Aayog is Shri Narendra Modi, current vice chairman is Dr. Rajiv Kumar and the current chief executive officer is Shri Amitabh Kant.**

Indian Army establishes Quantum Laboratory in Mhow, Madhya Pradesh

- **The Indian Army has established the Quantum Laboratory at Military College of Telecommunication Engineering (MCTE) in Mhow, in the state of Madhya Pradesh. The new laboratory has been launched to advance research and training in emerging technology domains. Army Chief Gen M M Naravane was briefed on the facility during his recent visit to Mhow.**
- **At MCTE, an artificial intelligence (AI) centre has also been set up with more than 140 deployments in forward areas. According to a press statement issued by the Indian Ministry of Defence (MoD), cyber warfare training is being provided through advanced cyber range, and cyber security labs.**
- **The Army is making steady, yet significant strides in the field of emerging technology domains. The Army, with support from the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) has recently established the Quantum Lab at Military College of Telecommunication Engineering, Mhow in Madhya Pradesh to spearhead research and training in this key developing field.**
- **This research work is expected to transform the existing system of cryptography in the Indian armed forces to post quantum cryptography. Quantum key distribution, quantum computing, post quantum cryptography and quantum communication will be the key focus areas in the research.**

The **Indian Army is the land-based branch and the largest component of the Indian Armed Forces. The President of India is the Supreme Commander of the Indian Army**, and its professional head is the **Chief of Army Staff (COAS)**, who is a four-star general. Two officers have been conferred with the rank of field marshal, a five-star rank, which is a ceremonial position of great honour. **The Indian Army originated from the armies of the East India Company, which eventually became the British Indian Army, and the armies of the princely states, which were merged into the national army after independence. General Bipin Rawat is the first and current Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) of India. General Manoj Mukund Naravane is the current and 28th Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) as well as the temporary Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee since 15 December 2021.**

Uttar Pradesh's first data centre park to be set up in Greater Noida

- **Uttar Pradesh will soon be a data centre hub a facility that centralizes an organization's shared IT operations and equipment to store, process and disseminate data and applications, as the state's first data centre park is all set to come up in the Greater Noida region.**
- **The government has given approval to Yotta Infrastructure to realize the datacenter dreams in the state. "The datacentre park will consist of 6 interconnected datacentre buildings offering 30,000 server racks capacity and 200 megawatt of power. It will be set up at an estimated cost of Rs 7,000 crore.**

Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in India as well as the most populous country subdivision in the world. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950, giving the acronym UP. The state is divided into 18 divisions and 75 districts with the capital being Lucknow. On 9 November 2000, a new state, Uttarakhand, was carved out from the state's Himalayan hill region. The two major rivers of the state, the Ganges and Yamuna, join at Allahabad and flow further east as Ganges. The state contributes 80 seats to the lower house of the Indian Parliament, Lok Sabha and 31 seats to the upper house of the Indian Parliament, Rajya Sabha. Anandiben Mafatbhai Patel is serving as the current Governor of Uttar Pradesh. She also served as Governor of Madhya Pradesh. She has served as the first female Chief Minister of Gujarat. Yogi Adityanath is serving as the current Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh.

Government of India notifies new rules for consumer commissions

- **The Centre has notified rules for Consumer Protection (Jurisdiction of the District Commission, the State Commission and the National Commission) Rules, 2021.**
- **The revised pecuniary jurisdiction for entertaining consumer complaints shall be upto 50 lakh rupees for District Commissions, more than 50 lakh to two crore rupees for State Commissions and more than two crore rupees for National Commission.**
- **The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 promulgates a three-tier quasi-judicial mechanism for redressal of consumer disputes namely District Commissions, State Commissions and National Commission.**
- **After the Act came into force, it was observed that the existing provisions relating to pecuniary jurisdiction of consumer commissions were leading to cases which could earlier be filed in National Commission to be filed in State Commissions and cases which could earlier be filed in State Commissions to be filed in District Commissions.**
- **This caused a significant increase in the workload of District Commissions, leading to rise in pendency and delay in disposal of cases, defeating the very object of securing speedy redressal to consumers as envisaged under the Act. Central Government held wide consultation with States and UTs, consumer organizations and law chairs and examined the issues that had created long pendency of cases in detail.**

Centre tells SC that it has decided to retain Rs 8 lakh income criteria for determining EWS

- **The Centre has told the Supreme Court that it has decided to accept the recommendation of a three-member panel to retain the current gross annual family income limit for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) of Rs 8 lakh or less.**
- **The government said that the panel has recommended that family income is a "feasible criterion" for defining EWS and in the current situation, a threshold of Rs 8 lakh of annual family income seems reasonable for determining EWS. In its affidavit filed in a matter related to admissions for NEET-PG, the Centre said the panel has recommended that "only those families whose annual income is up to Rs 8 lakh would be eligible to get the benefit of EWS reservation".**

Karnataka Becomes First Indian State to Draft Bill Protecting Cyclists, Pedestrians

- **The Karnataka Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT) released an official draft Active Mobility Bill which looks into the protection of the rights of pedestrians and cyclists in urban centres all over the state.**
- **The government is preparing a first-of-its-kind bill offering protection to pedestrians and cyclists, which will also ensure their rights in all cities of Karnataka. The Directorate of Urban Land transport (DULT) has**

published the Active draft ‘Mobility Bill, Karnataka 2021’ mandating Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) to design and build infrastructure for pedestrians and fix penalties for failure.

Karnataka is a state in the south western region of India. It was formed on 1 November 1956, with the passage of the States Reorganisation Act. Originally known as the State of Mysore, it was renamed Karnataka in 1973. The capital and largest city is Bengaluru. Basavaraj Bommai is serving as the current Chief Minister of Karnataka. Thaawarchand Gehlot is currently serving as the Governor of Karnataka. Coffee production in India is dominated in the hill tracts of South Indian states, with Karnataka accounting for 71%, followed by Kerala with 21% and Tamil Nadu (5% of overall production with 8,200 tonnes).

Parliamentary panel that will examine bill to raise legal age of marriage has only one woman member

- The parliamentary panel assigned to examine the landmark bill which seeks to raise the legal age of marriage for women to 21 has only one woman MP out of 31 members. The Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill, which will have wider influence over society especially females, was introduced in Lok Sabha during the winter session and referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports.
- The bill, piloted by the Women and Child Development Ministry, seeks to increase the legal age of marriage from 18 to 21. According to the members’ list of the parliamentary standing committee, led by senior BJP leader Vinay Sahasrabudhe, available on the Rajya Sabha website, TMC MP Sushmita Dev is the only woman among the 31 members.
- The bill seeks to increase the legal age for women to marry to 21 years, as is the provision for men. It seeks to amend seven personal laws — the Indian Christian Marriage Act; the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act; the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act; the Special Marriage Act; the Hindu Marriage Act; and the Foreign Marriage Act.

Tamil Nadu unveils draft women’s policy

- Mandatory martial arts training for school and college girls, 50 more person-days for all single- and women-headed households under MGNREGS and 33.3% representation in registered parties are among the provisions in the draft Tamil Nadu State New Policy for Women 2021.
- The document was released by the State Government. As per the draft, all forms of transport must be made women-friendly. “In buses, the first half of the seats shall be earmarked for women, and the front exit/entrance shall be used only by women,” it said. The policy would be implemented over five years.
- The draft policy provides for the establishment of a system of “victim support” for all cases of abuse, and focuses on rehabilitation and identity protection at the first instance, without delay, to ensure that women do not feel abandoned.

Tamil Nadu lies in the southernmost part of the Indian subcontinent and is bordered by the union territory of Puducherry and the South Indian states of Kerala, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh. Its capital and largest city is Chennai. Its official language is Tamil, which is one of the longest-surviving classical languages in the world. Ravindra Narayana Ravi is the current Governor of Tamil Nadu. M.K. Stalin is the current Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.

International



World's first floating city to set Sail in South Korea by 2025

- South Korea is soon going to get the world's first floating city, to deal with the problem of floods due to rising sea levels. The floating city project is a joint effort by the UN Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habit) and OCEANIX. The city will be built off the coast of Busan in South Korea and is likely to be completed by 2025.
- An MoU was signed between the UN-Habitat, Republic of Korea, and Oceanix to build a full-fledged floating city near the banks of Busan that can withstand floods, tsunamis, and level 5 hurricanes.
- 'Oceanix,' a company dedicated towards making futuristic floating cities, got backing from the United Nations Human Settlement Programme, UN-Habitat, one of the most credible organizations in the world to build a floating city in South Korea.
- The floating city will have 'flood-proof infrastructure' and comprise several man-made islands to eliminate the risk of flooding. The self-sufficient city will be specifically designed to withstand natural disasters like tsunamis, floods, and Category 5 hurricanes.

South Korea, officially the Republic of Korea (ROK), is a country in East Asia, constituting the southern part of the Korean Peninsula and sharing a land border with North Korea. South Seoul is the Capital of South Korea. Moon Jae-in is the current President of South Korea. Kim Boo-kyum is currently the Prime Minister.

Romania President Klaus Iohannis nominates Defence Minister Nicolae Ciuca as PM

- Romanian President Klaus Iohannis has nominated Defence Minister Nicolae Ciuca to form a new government as Prime Minister.
- Earlier, the National Liberal Party (PNL), the Social Democratic Party (PSD) and the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR) reached an agreement to form a coalition government, which enjoys the support of the 18 MPs representing the country's minorities.

Romania is a country at the crossroads of Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe. Its capital and largest city is Bucharest. The Romanian leu is the currency of Romania. Nicolae Ionel Ciuca has been serving as Prime Minister of Romania since 25 November 2021 after receiving widespread parliamentary support.

Japan to get world's first operational dual-mode bus and rail vehicle

- Japan to get world's first operational dual-mode bus and rail vehicle. The vehicles will run on a 50-kilometer course connecting the town of Kaiyo in Tokushima Prefecture and the city of Muroto in Kochi Prefecture, of which 10 km will be on a railway track.
- Asa Seaside Railway Corp. in Tokushima Prefecture said it will roll out the DMV on Dec. 25, having cleared safety checks by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism.

Naruhito is the Emperor of Japan. He acceded to the Chrysanthemum Throne on 1 May 2019, beginning the Reiwa era, following the abdication of his father, Emperor Akihito, on 30 April 2019. He is the 126th monarch according to Japan's traditional order of succession. Tokyo is the capital city of Japan and yen is the official currency of Japan and it is the third most traded currency in the foreign exchange market after the United States dollar and the euro. Fumio Kishida is the current Prime Minister of Japan since 4 October 2021. He has also served as President of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) since 29 September 2021.

Caribbean island Barbados becomes newest republic cut links with the Queen

- At midnight, the Caribbean island Barbados has become the world's newest republic and in doing so removes the Queen as its head of state.
- Republicanism has been rumbling for some time in Barbados. **Prime Minister Mia Mottley** described it as a **chance for the island to assert itself** and show greater self-confidence. She said it was time to fully leave our colonial past.

Barbados is an island country in the Lesser Antilles of the West Indies, in the Caribbean region of the Americas, and the most easterly of the Caribbean Islands. Bridgetown is the capital and largest city of Barbados. The Dollar has been the currency of Barbados since 1935.

The world's most expensive city for first time

- Tel Aviv is now the world's most expensive city to live in, according to a survey published. The Israeli city has climbed five rungs to bag the top spot for the first time due to the strength of the national currency, the shekel as well as soaring inflation, according to Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
- The Worldwide Cost of Living Index is compiled by comparing prices in US dollars for goods and services in 173 cities. After Tel Aviv, Paris and Singapore came joint second, followed by Switzerland's Zurich, and Hong Kong. New York ranked sixth and Geneva seventh.

Israel is a country in the Middle East, Jerusalem is one of the oldest cities in the world, and is considered holy to the three major Abrahamic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Both Israel and the Palestinian Authority claim Jerusalem as their capital, however, neither claim is widely recognized internationally. Knesset is the unicameral national legislature of Israel. Israeli new shekel is the currency of Israel. Naftali Bennett is an Israeli politician serving as the 13th and current Prime Minister of Israel since 13 June 2021. Isaac Herzog is serving as the current president of Israel since 7 July 2021.

Bangladesh and US kick off bilateral maritime exercise CARAT for a free and open Indo-Pacific

- Bangladesh Navy (BN) and the US military personnel kicked off the annual Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) maritime exercise. The exercise will be carried out virtually and in the Bay of Bengal, said the Commander of the US 7th Fleet.
- The nine-day engagement focuses on a full spectrum of naval capabilities and features Cooperative activities that highlight the ability of US and Bangladesh to work together toward the common goal of ensuring a free and open Indo-pacific. The objectives of CARAT include enhancing regional cooperation and building relationships.
- The at-sea phase of the exercise takes place in the Bay of Bengal where US Navy forces will join with ships and aircraft from the Bangladesh Navy for partnered training to build interoperability and to strengthen relationships.
- Bangladesh Navy has been taking part in the CARAT exercise since 2011. CARAT exercise is observing its 27th anniversary. It is designed to address shared maritime security concerns and strengthen partnerships between regional navies.

Bangladesh is a country in South Asia. It shares land borders with India and Myanmar (Burma). Nepal, Bhutan and China are located near Bangladesh but do not share a border with it. Dhaka is its capital and largest city, followed by Chittagong, which has the country's largest port. Bangladeshi taka is the currency of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman often shortened as Sheikh Mujib or Mujib, was a Bangladeshi politician, statesman and Founding Father of Bangladesh who served as the first President and later as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh from 17 April 1971 until his assassination on 15 August 1975. Mohammad Abdul Hamid is the 16th and current President of Bangladesh, in office since April 2013. Sheikh Hasina is the current Prime Minister of the Bangladesh. India shares its longest international border with Bangladesh (4,096-kilometer) (2,545-mile).

Japan-India-Vietnam trilateral could be created for Indo-Pacific stability

- Vietnam's PM Pham Minh Chin's recent visit to Japan to strengthen strategic partnership aimed at creating peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region amid China's hegemonistic designs has opened up the creation of a prospective trilateral – Japan-India-Vietnam which can be termed as JIV.
- While there has been no formal move to create this trilateral in the Indo-Pacific region, there is enough potential for such a grouping amid expanding strategic ties between India and Japan, India and Vietnam and Vietnam and Japan.
- This would be appropriate as India and Vietnam celebrate 50 years of creation of diplomatic ties in 2022. Ahead of this, the Chairman of National Assembly of Vietnam plan to visit India in December. The celebration of 50 years of creation of diplomatic ties and fifth anniversary of the Indo-Vietnam Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2021 are testimony to the growing partnership between New Delhi and Hanoi.
- At the virtual summit held last December PM Narendra Modi had said that Vietnam is an important pillar of India's Act East policy and a vital partner of its Indo-Pacific Vision. On that occasion the two sides signed seven pacts across key sectors including defence and energy and released a joint vision for peace and prosperity eyeing to contribute to the South China Sea region's stability.
- India as an emerging global power should play an important role in maintaining Freedom of Navigation and Freedom of Overflight in the South China Sea (SCS) region amid China's territorial claims. The prospective JIV could contribute to maintaining peace in the SCS region. India and Japan are not new to trilaterals being part of India-Japan-USA; India-Japan-Australia; and emerging India-Japan-Russia.

Vietnam is the easternmost country on the Indochina Peninsula in Southeast Asia. Hanoi is the capital of Vietnam. The dong has been the currency of Vietnam since May 3, 1978. Nguyen Xuan Phuc is the current President of Vietnam. Pham Minh Chinh is the current Prime Minister of Vietnam.

South Sudan to end child marriages by 2030

- South Sudan's Government has promised to end child marriage by 2030 in line with the African Union's campaign to end child marriages in the continent. Paramount chiefs from 10 regional states and the three administrative areas are meeting in the capital, Juba, for the second national conference on ending child marriages.
- South Sudan is one of 40 countries in the world with the highest rates of child marriages. A survey conducted in 2010 found that about seven per cent of girls marry before the age of 15 and 40 per cent before the age of 18.

South Sudan is a landlocked country in east/central Africa. South Sudanese pound is the official currency of the Republic of South Sudan. Salva Kiir Mayardit has been President of South Sudan since its independence in 2011.

Polls opened for first election since EX- President Yahya Jammeh fled the Gambia

- Polls have opened in The Gambia for the first election since former President Yahya Jammeh left office and fled the country in 2017. Six presidential candidates, including the incumbent Adama Barrow, are running.
- The election is seen as a litmus test for the West African nation's democratic transition. Some nine lakh sixty thousand voters, almost half of the country's population, are eligible to cast ballots.

The Gambia is a country in West Africa. It is the smallest country within mainland Africa and is surrounded by Senegal, except for its western coast on the Atlantic Ocean. Banjul is the Gambian capital and the country's largest metropolitan area. Adama Barrow is the current President of the Gambia, in office since 2017.

Russia, Southeast Asia Conclude First Joint Naval Exercise

- Russia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have concluded their first joint naval exercise, Indonesia's navy said as the region faces rising tensions with China.
- The three-day exercise off the coast of Indonesia's Sumatra Island aimed at increasing interoperability between the ASEAN member states and the Russian navy in the strategic maritime area. It comes amid rising tensions between major powers in the South China Sea, a resource-rich waterway of geopolitical significance.

- **Russia and the Southeast Asian bloc held their fourth summit** online in October, a meeting timed with the anniversary of relations between Russia and the 10-member regional grouping.

ASEAN officially the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, is an economic union comprising 10 member states in Southeast Asia, which promotes intergovernmental cooperation and facilitates economic, political, security, military, educational, and sociocultural integration between its members and other countries in Asia. ASEAN's primary objective was to accelerate economic growth and through that social progress and cultural development. ASEAN itself was created on 8 August 1967, when the foreign ministers of five countries signed of the ASEAN declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by its founding fathers. Founding Fathers of ASEAN are: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. 1990s – Membership doubled after the changing conditions in the region following the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 and the Cold War in 1991. Addition of Brunei (1984), Vietnam (1995), Laos and Myanmar (1997), and Cambodia (1999). The 8th August is observed as ASEAN Day. ASEAN Secretariat is located in Indonesia, Jakarta. The motto of ASEAN is “One Vision, One Identity, One Community”.

Adama Barrow re-elected The Gambia's president

- **Adama Barrow has comfortably won a second term in The Gambia's presidential election**, with thousands of supporters celebrating and opponents disputing the results. Barrow garnered 53 percent of the vote. **The election was being closely watched as a test of the democratic transition in The Gambia, where Jammeh ruled for 22 years after seizing power in a bloodless coup in 1994.**
- **He was forced into exile in Equatorial Guinea in January 2017 after Barrow**, then a relative unknown, defeated him at the ballot box. **Jammeh lost to Barrow in the 2016 election** but had to be removed by military intervention from other West African states.

The Gambia is a country in West Africa. It is the **smallest country within mainland Africa** and is surrounded by Senegal, except for its western coast on the Atlantic Ocean. **Banjul is the Gambian capital** and the country's largest metropolitan area. **Adama Barrow is the current President of the Gambia**, in office since 2017.

Olaf Scholz sworn in as Germany's new Chancellor

- **In Germany, Social Democratic Party of Germany leader Olaf Scholz has been nominated as the country's next Chancellor by Parliament bringing the curtain down on Angela Merkel's 16-year reign.**
- **Olaf Scholz has cleared the final hurdle on his path to majority after Green Party members approved their coalition deal with his Social Democrats, SPD, and the Free Democrats, FDP.**
- **Now the three parties have approved the coalition deal, this political grouping was sworn in and the era of Angela Merkel was officially give way to a new age under Social Democrat Scholz. While support of at least 369 lawmakers is required in the 736-seat lower house to take up the top job, the three coalition partners have 416 seats together, giving them a comfortable majority in the house.**
- **Olaf Scholz has been sworn in as Germany's new chancellor, bringing to an end Angela Merkel's historic 16 years as leader.** He was voted in by the German parliament, where his three-party coalition has a substantial majority, and given a standing ovation.
- **The German parliament, the Bundestag, backed his appointment by 395 votes to 303, and he was then formally appointed as the ninth federal chancellor by President Frank-Walter Steinmeier.**

Germany is a country in Central Europe. It is the **second-most populous country in Europe after Russia**, and the most populous member state of the European Union. **The nation's capital and largest city is Berlin**, and its **financial centre is Frankfurt; the largest urban area is the Ruhr.** Frank-Walter Steinmeier is serving as the **President of Germany** since 19 March 2017. **Euro is the official currency of it.**

Forbes feature Sitharaman in 100 most powerful women list; Nykaa's Falguni Nayar makes debut

- For the third time in a row, Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman made it Forbes' 100 most powerful women in the world. This year, she is ranked at number 37, up from last year when she was placed at 41.
- She is also two spots ahead of her American counterpart Janet Yellen. Every year, the American business magazine releases a list of 100 powerful women of the world. This year, the 18th annual list of power women included 40 CEOs, the most since 2015, who, according to the magazine, "oversee a record \$3.3 trillion in revenue." The list also included 19 world leaders, an immunologist.
- In another remarkable highlight of the list, it also features a new number one for the first time in more than a decade, as philanthropist Mackenzie Scott replaced outgoing German Chancellor Angela Merkel. On number two is US vice president Kamala Harris, who moved up one spot than last year.
- The Indian-origin woman made history this year after she became the first female vice president and the highest-ranking female official in US history, as well as the first African American and first Asian-American vice president.
- Christine Lagarde, the president of the European Central Bank, is ranked at number three. Besides Sitharaman, Indians to feature on the list include HCL Corporation CEO Roshni Nadar Malhotra at 52; Biocon Executive Chairperson Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw at 72. Nykaa founder Falguni Nayar also made her debut as she was featured on number 88. Other notable faces on the list are Facebook's whistleblower Frances Haugen (100), Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed (43).

Forbes is an American business magazine owned by Integrated Whale Media Investments and the Forbes family. Published eight times a year, it features articles on finance, industry, investing, and marketing topics. Forbes also reports on related subjects such as technology, communications, science, politics, and law. Its headquarters is located in Jersey City, New Jersey. Primary competitors in the national business magazine category include Fortune and Bloomberg BusinessWeek. The magazine is well known for its lists and rankings, including of the richest Americans (the Forbes 400), of the America's Wealthiest Celebrities, of the world's top companies (the Forbes Global 2000), Forbes list of The World's Most Powerful People, and The World's Billionaires. The motto of Forbes magazine is "Change the World". Its chair and editor-in-chief is Steve Forbes, and its CEO is Mike Federle.

China is world's biggest captor of journalists: RSF Report

- A new report by Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has said China is the world's biggest captor of journalists with at least 127 reporters currently detained. China has justified the arrests of reporters and citizen journalists by accusing them of provoking trouble.
- The report titled 'The Great Leap Backwards of Journalism in China' reveals China's violations against its own international commitments to freedom of opinion and expression.
- The RSF report also details how journalists are being pressured to act as Xi Jinping's mouthpiece. According to the report, journalists will soon be required to attend a 90-hour annual training focused on Xi Jinping's thoughts in order to get and renew their press cards. In the year 2020, China's intimidation of foreign reporters, based on surveillance and visa blackmail, forced 18 of them to leave the country, it also said.
- The Chinese Communist Party also detained at least ten journalists and online commentators in the same year, according to Reporters Without Borders, for the mere act of telling the public about the Covid-19 situation in Wuhan. Two of them, Zhang Zhan and Fang Bin, remain detained in China to this day.
- Meanwhile, the government of China has also unveiled a series of plans that are seen to further consolidate the Chinese Communist Party's control over the media. It has long kept a tight grip on its press and flow of information to its public. Some press freedom organisations, however, claim that the ruling party has tightened control over the media.

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) is an international non-profit and non-governmental organization with the stated aim of safeguarding the right to freedom of information. It describes its advocacy as founded on the belief that everyone requires access to the news and information, in line with Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that recognizes the right to receive and share information regardless of frontiers, along with other international rights charters. RSF has consultative status at the United Nations, UNESCO, the Council of Europe, and the International Organisation of the Francophonie. RSF was founded in Montpellier, France, in 1985 by Robert Menard, Remy Loury, Jacques Molenat and Emilien Jubineau. RSF's head office is based in Paris.

Dubai becomes first paperless government in the world

- The Emirate of Dubai has achieved its objectives of the Dubai Paperless Strategy, launched in 2018, to establish itself as a leading digital capital and become the world's first paperless government.
- The Crown Prince stated the next stage will be marked by advanced strategies to create and enhance digital life in Dubai over the next five decades.

Dubai is the most populous city in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the capital of the Emirate of Dubai. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum is the Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), its Minister of Defence, and ruler of the Emirate of Dubai.

SAARC Charter Day being observed

- The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Charter Day is observed every year on 8th December. On this day in 1985, SAARC Charter was adopted in Dhaka, during the first summit of the group. This year marks the 37th Anniversary of the regional group.
- As mentioned in its charter, the prime focus of SAARC is to work collectively to promote the welfare of people in the region and to improve their standard of living through social progress and economic development.
- The aim of SAARC members is to promote stability, peace and progress in the region. SAARC has organised 18 summits since 1985. These specialised bodies promote regional cooperation by SAARC members in various fields.

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is the regional intergovernmental organization and geopolitical union of states in South Asia. Its member states are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. SAARC comprises 3% of the world's area, 21% of the world's population and 4.21% (US\$3.67 trillion) of the global economy, as of 2019. SAARC was founded in Dhaka on 8 December 1985. Its secretariat is based in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Tesla's Elon Musk Named Time Magazine's Person Of The Year

- Time magazine named Tesla founder and space entrepreneur Elon Musk as its person of the year, capping a roller-coaster 2021 for the technology magnate. Time first presented its Person of the Year award in 1927.
- The brash South African-born 50-year-old Elon Musk, who is also the founder and CEO space exploration company SpaceX, recently passed Amazon founder Jeff Bezos as the world's wealthiest person as the rising price of Tesla pushed his net worth to around \$300 billion. He owns about 17% of Elon Musk's stock, which sold for almost \$1,000 each.

Person of the Year (called Man of the Year or Woman of the Year until 1999) is an annual issue of the United States news magazine and website *Time* featuring a person, a group, an idea, or an object that "for better or for worse... has done the most to influence the events of the year". Time also runs an annual reader's poll that has no effect on the selection, which is made solely by the magazine's editors. The tradition of selecting a "Man of the Year" began in 1927, with *Time* editors contemplating the news makers of the year. Mahatma Gandhi is the only Indian to be named as Time magazine "Person of the Year" for the year 1930. In 1949, Winston Churchill was named "Man of the Half-Century", and the last issue of 1989 named Mikhail Gorbachev as "Man of the Decade". The December 31, 1999 issue of Time named Albert Einstein the "Person of the Century". Franklin D. Roosevelt and Mahatma Gandhi were chosen as runners-up.

US approves Indigenous name change for Colorado Mountain

- A federal panel has approved renaming a Colorado peak after a Cheyenne woman who facilitated relations between white settlers and Native American tribes in the early 19th century, part of a broader campaign to replace derogatory place names across the United States.
- **Mestaa'ehehe Mountain, which is pronounced "mess-taw-HAY,"** bears the name of and honors an influential translator also known as **Owl Woman who mediated between Native Americans and white traders and soldiers** in what is now southern Colorado.
- The renaming of what was known as Squaw Mountain, 48 kilometers west of Denver, **comes after US Interior Secretary Deb Haaland formally declared "squaw" a derogatory term** in November and said she is taking steps to remove it from federal government use and to rename other derogatory place names. **Haaland is the nation's first Native American Cabinet official.**

United States of America (USA) is a federal republic composed of 50 states and capital is Washington, D.C., Donald John Trump served as 45th President of the United States. He became the oldest and wealthiest person ever to assume the presidency, the first without prior military or government service, and the fifth to have won the election while losing the popular vote. Joseph Robinette Biden served as the 47th vice president of the United States from 2009 to 2017. In January 2017, Barak Obama awarded Biden the Presidential Medal of Freedom with distinction. He is current and 46 the President of the United States and he is the oldest President of America.

New Caledonia rejects independence from France in third referendum

- An independence referendum was held in New Caledonia, a French territory in the South Pacific, on 12 December 2021. The poll was the third and final to be held under the terms of the Noumea Accord, following votes in 2018 and 2020, in which independence was rejected by 56.7% and 53.3% respectively. Voters overwhelmingly rejected independence, with 96.50% voting against independence and 3.50% for independence.
- The archipelago of about 185,000 voters, 2,000 kilometres east of Australia, was granted three independence referendums under a 1988 deal aimed at easing tensions on the islands. At stake in the vote was one of France's biggest overseas territories which is home to about 10 percent of the world's reserves of nickel, which is used to make stainless steel, batteries and mobile phones.
- The territory is also a key part of France's claim of being a Pacific power, with New Caledonia granting France rights to the surrounding ocean, as well as a military staging post. Experts suspect that an independent New Caledonia would move closer to Beijing, which has built up close economic links and political influence on other Pacific islands.

New Caledonia is a sui generis collectivity of overseas France in the southwest Pacific Ocean. Noumea is the capital and largest city of the French special collectivity of New Caledonia. Emmanuel Macron has been serving as the President of France since 14 May 2017. The CFP franc is the currency used in the French overseas collectivities of French Polynesia, New Caledonia, and Wallis and Futuna.

US, Australia, Japan to fund undersea cable in Pacific

- The United States, Australia and Japan have said they will jointly fund the construction of an undersea cable to boost internet access in three tiny Pacific countries, as the Western allies seek to counter rising Chinese influence in the region.
- The three Western allies would develop the cable to provide faster internet to Nauru, Kiribati and the Federated States of Micronesia. The development of the undersea cable is the latest funding commitment from the Western allies in the telecommunications sector of the Pacific.
- In 2017, Australia have spent around 137 million Australian dollars for developing better internet access in Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. Development of undersea cable is the latest funding commitment of Western allies in telecommunications sector of the Pacific.

- **Western allies have launched this project as the US and its Indo-Pacific allies are of the views that cables laid by China might compromise regional security.** Though, China has denied any intention to use commercial fibre-optic cables for spying. These fibre-optic cables have more data capacity than satellites.

A submarine communications cable is laid on sea bed in between land-based stations in a bid to carry telecommunication signals across ocean & sea stretches. **First ever submarine communications cables were laid in 1850s to carry telegraphy traffic. It had established the first instant telecommunications ties between continents.** Subsequent generations of cables carried telephone traffic, followed by data communications traffic. **Modern cables use optical fibre technology in a bid to carry digital data,** including internet, telephone and private data traffic.

Russia blocks UN Move to treat climate as security threat

- **Russia blocked a United Nations Security Council draft resolution,** under negotiation for many months that **for the first time would have defined climate change as a threat to peace.** The resolution, which enjoyed wide-ranging support, would have **significantly expanded the criteria used by the most powerful U.N. agency to justify intervening in armed conflicts around the world.**
- Despite progress made to counter greenhouse gas emissions with an **agreement reached at the U.N.-sponsored climate summit in Glasgow, Scotland that accord fell far short of what many scientists say will be required to curb rising temperatures and disastrous changes** in weather patterns from a warming planet. Among other weaknesses, the agreement left unclear how the most vulnerable nations will be able to afford the enormous investments needed to adapt.
- **The draft resolution was first proposed by Germany in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in 2020. It was co-sponsored this year by Ireland and Niger, was blocked by Russia December 13, 2021, when India voted ‘no’ as well and China abstained from voting.**

India, Iran and Uzbekistan to develop transport corridor centred round Chabahar port

- **India, Iran and Uzbekistan discussed the further development of the transit and transportation corridor centred around the Iranian port of Chabahar** during a trilateral meeting on the **joint use of the port on the Gulf of Oman.** “The participants underlined the **important role played by Chabahar Port** during humanitarian crises as well as in enhancing regional connectivity”.
- “They also took note of the increase in **transit traffic between Central Asia and South Asia through the Shahid Behesti Terminal, Chabahar Port** and discussed further development of transportation corridor,” the statement added, **referring to the terminal at the port operated by the Indian company, India Ports Global Limited.** The Taliban takeover of Afghanistan had triggered speculation about the viability of Chabahar port, but **external affairs minister S Jaishankar told the Lok Sabha that the port had emerged as a commercial transit hub for the region and was a “more economical and stable route” for landlocked countries to reach India and the global market.**
- **India developed the Shahid Beheshti terminal of Chabahar as part of its efforts to access Afghanistan while bypassing the territory of Pakistan.** The US granted the port a special waiver from sanctions imposed on Iran in view of its strategic importance in shipping supplies to Afghanistan.

Chabahar Port is a seaport in Chabahar located in southeastern Iran, on the Gulf of Oman. It serves as Iran’s only oceanic port, and **consists of two separate ports named Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti,** each of which has five berths. **It is only about 170 kilometres west of the Pakistani port of Gwadar which is developed by China.** **Afghanistan, Iran and India signed a tripartite agreement on developing Chabahar port and setting up a trilateral transport and transit corridor in 2016.** It is a key part of India’s plans to enhance connectivity to Afghanistan and the Central Asian states.

Haitian Soup Finds a Place on UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List

- **The United Nations cultural agency (UNESCO) has added Joumou Soup – Haiti’s national symbol of freedom from slavery – to its intangible heritage list,** saying the soup is “so much more than just a dish”.

- UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee decided to put **Joumou** on its list of **Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity**. The dish, also known as giraumon soup, is made of pumpkin, vegetables, plantains, meat, pasta and spices.
- **Soup joumou** is a **mildly spicy soup native to Haitian cuisine**. The soup is traditionally cooked with pumpkin winter squash.

Australia, Britain sign free trade agreement

- **Australia and Britain signed a free trade agreement that will eliminate almost all taxes on exports between the countries**. The FTA was signed at a virtual ceremony by Australian Trade Minister Dan Tehan in Adelaide and Britain's Secretary of State for International Trade Anne-Marie Trevelyan in London.
- **The deal abolishes 99 per cent of taxes on exports, saving Australia about USD 10 billion on exports including lamb, beef, sugar and dairy**. It is expected to save Britain 200 million Australian dollars (USD 144 million) a year on items such as cars, whisky and cosmetics.
- **Australian agricultural exporters also will have better access to the British market and 40 million Australian dollars (USD 29 million) a year of tariffs** will be removed from Australian wines entering the United Kingdom. Australians and Britons will find it easier to live and work in the other country.

Australia is the largest country in Oceania and the world's sixth-largest country by total area. Australia's capital is Canberra, and its largest city is Sydney. Elizabeth II is the Head of the Commonwealth and queen regnant of seven independent Commonwealth countries: the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, and Ceylon. Scott Morrison is the current Prime Minister of Australia. The Australian dollar is the currency of Australia.

Reporters Without Borders release damning report on Chinese regime's repression against journalism; India ranks 142 out of 180 countries

- **Since President Xi Jinping came to power in early 2013, a wave of arrests unprecedented since the end of the Maoist era has hit journalists and political commentators across China, abruptly ending a decade of experimentation with pluralism and debate in Chinese media, said a major report released by Reporters Without Borders (RSF).**
- **The 2021 RSF World Press Freedom Index ranks the People's Republic of China 177 out of 180 countries, only two spots above North Korea, with at least 127 journalists and press defenders under detention. India ranks 142 and Pakistan 145 while North Korea and Eritrea are ranked 179 and 180.**
- **"Two years after China's Pursuit of a New World Media Order, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) publishes The Great Leap Backwards of Journalism in China, a report revealing the extent of the regime's campaign of repression against the right to information," the media watchdog said.**
- **According to the RSF, "published a year before the Chinese Communist Party's 20th National Congress, which will take place at the end of December 2022, The Great Leap Backwards of Journalism in China is a damning 82-page document that demonstrates the acceleration of China's violations against its own international commitments to freedom of opinion and expression. The report, released on December 7, reveals the unprecedented campaign of repression led by the Chinese regime in recent years against journalism and the right to information worldwide."**
- **RSF's secretary general, Christophe Deloire, in the forward to the media watchdog's report, said before Xi came to power in 2013, there was an emerging trend of improvements in press freedom, but he had "put a brutal end to this partial opening and restored a media culture worthy of the Maoist era"**.

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) is an international non-profit and non-governmental organization with the stated aim of safeguarding the right to freedom of information. It describes its advocacy as founded on the belief that everyone requires access to the news and information, in line with Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that recognizes the right to receive and share information regardless of frontiers, along with other international rights charters. It is headquartered in Paris.

Austria ruling party picks Nehammer for chancellor

- After 24 hours of political turmoil, Austria's ruling People's Party has chosen Interior Minister Karl Nehammer to take over as leader of both party and country. Mr Nehammer will be the party's third choice of chancellor in weeks, after Sebastian Kurz stood down in October. Mr Kurz is under investigation after he was implicated in a corruption scandal. The change at the top marks an end to the whirlwind career of Sebastian Kurz, who was just 31 when he became Austrian chancellor in 2017.

Austria is a landlocked East Alpine country in the southern part of Central Europe. It is composed of nine federated states, one of which is Vienna, Austria's capital and largest city. Alexander Van der Bellen is the current President of Austria. Karl Nehammer is serving as Chancellor of Austria since 6 December 2021. Euro is the official currency of it.

Gabriel Boric, a former student activist, is elected Chile's youngest president

- Chileans elected Gabriel Boric as their next president, entrusting the young leftist lawmaker with helping to shape the future of a nation that has been roiled by protests and is now drafting a new constitution.
- At 35, Boric will be the nation's youngest leader and by far its most liberal since President Salvador Allende, who died by suicide during the 1973 military coup that ushered in a brutal 17-year dictatorship.
- The President-elect defeated José Antonio Kast, a far-right former lawmaker who sought to portray Boric as a radical communist who would put Chile on a ruinous path, by destroying one of the region's most solid economies. Boric's coalition includes the Communist Party.

Chile is a country in western South America. It occupies a long, narrow strip of land between the Andes to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. The country's capital and largest city is Santiago, and its national language is Spanish. The peso is the currency of Chile.

Israel approves plan to double settlers in occupied Golan Heights

- Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's cabinet voted in favour of the plan that aims to build 7,300 settler homes in the region over a five-year period, during a meeting held at the Mevo Hama community in the Golan.
- Israel's government approved a \$317 million plan to double the Jewish settler population in the Golan Heights, 40 years after it annexed the territory captured from Syria.

The sugarloaf pineapple: GIs as a development tool in action

- The West African nation of Benin has registered its first protected geographical indication at the African Intellectual Property Organisation. The honour goes to the sugarloaf pineapple from the Allada Plateau, which has juicy and sweet white flesh, and the distinction of remaining green when fully ripe.
- Benin formerly known as Dahomey is a country in West Africa. The capital of Benin is Porto-Novo.

Britain, Norway, seal first post-Brexit fishing deal

- Britain and Norway have signed their first post-Brexit fishing deal, allowing each country access to the other's waters and reciprocal quotas, the government in Oslo announced.
- Under the agreement, which covers 2022, both countries can fish up to 30,000 tonnes of demersal, or deep-water stocks, and 17,000 tonnes of herring in the waters of the other. Britain will also be allowed to fish up to 6,550 tonnes of cod around Svalbard, in the Barents Sea, the scene of past fishing disputes between the two countries.

Johnson appoints foreign secretary Liz Truss as Brexit negotiator

- British Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced the appointment of Britain's foreign secretary to become the country's lead negotiator with the European Union, after long-time ally David Frost resigned after a week political upheaval in the Conservative Party.
- Liz Truss will have ministerial responsibility with the EU and will lead negotiations to resolve problems arising from provisions of the Brexit agreement covering trade with Northern Ireland.

Brexit (“British exit”) was the withdrawal of the United Kingdom (UK) from the European Union (EU) at 23:00 GMT on 31 January 2020. The UK is the first and so far only member state to have left the EU, after 47 years of having been a part of the union — the EU and its predecessor the European Communities (EC), which included the European Economic Community — since 1 January 1973. Following Brexit, EU law and the Court of Justice of the European Union no longer have primacy over British laws, except in select areas in relation to Northern Ireland. The European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 retains relevant EU law as domestic law, which the UK can now amend or repeal. **Under the terms of the Brexit withdrawal agreement, Northern Ireland continues to participate in the European Single Market in relation to goods, and to be a *de facto* member of the EU Customs Union.**

Somalia’s President suspends Prime Minister pending investigation

- **Somalia’s President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed** said he had suspended the Prime Minister’s powers, escalating a destabilising dispute in the Horn of Africa country. The president, who had suspended Prime Minister Mohammed Hussein Roble before over an earlier confrontation, he had taken the action pending an investigation of accusations, that the prime minister had acquired land fraudulently.
- According to analysts, the dispute between Mohamed and Roble has generated months of tension, which risks distracting the government from its fight against the Al Qaeda-linked insurgent group – Al Shabaab. The suspension of Roble’s powers comes a day after Mohamed and Roble accused each other of holding up parliamentary elections. The parliamentary elections began on November 1 and were supposed to be completed by December 24, but one newly elected lawmaker said that only 24 of 275 representatives had been elected.

Somalia is a country in the Horn of Africa. The country is bordered by Ethiopia to the west, Djibouti to the northwest, the Gulf of Aden to the north, the Indian Ocean to the east, and Kenya to the southwest. **The capital and largest city is Mogadishu. The Somali shilling is the official currency of Somalia.**

Ecuador becomes first country to make Covid vaccine obligatory for children

- **Ecuador has become the first country to make coronavirus vaccines obligatory for children. Everyone from the age of five is eligible to be vaccinated.** Some 69 percent of Ecuador’s population of 17.7 million people have received two vaccine doses to date, and 900,000 have received a third, booster dose. Everyone from the age of five is eligible to be vaccinated.

Ecuador is a country in northwestern South America, bordered by Colombia on the north, Peru on the east and south, and the Pacific Ocean on the west. Ecuador also includes the Galápagos Islands in the Pacific, about 1,000 kilometers (621 mi) west of the mainland. **The capital is Quito. The United States dollar is the currency of it. Guillermo Lasso is current President of Ecuador since 24 May 2021.**

The ‘India Out’ campaign in the Maldives

- **Over the last three years since Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih was elected to office, an ‘India Out’ [#IndiaOut] campaign has cropped up every now and then within the Indian Ocean island nation,** mostly on social media.
- **The campaign is led by government critics who accuse the Solih government of “allowing Indian boots on the ground”,** and thereby “compromising the sovereignty” of the island nation. The ruling administration has denied there is any Indian military presence in the country, or a threat to Maldives’s sovereignty.
- **Among the many grievances in social media posts by prominent members of ‘India Out’ campaign, a recurring complaint is the lack of transparency in agreements being signed between the Solih government and India.** “An agreement or arrangement that is made with a development partner has to be shared with Parliament and approved.
- **The much of the criticism leveled by the Maldivian opposition and the ‘India Out’ campaign wouldn’t have arisen had these bilateral agreements been publicly discussed in the Maldives Parliament.** But the ruling government and the defence ministry saying that these agreements are confidential has led to agitation in political circles that percolated down to ordinary Maldivian nationals.

Maldives is a South Asian country, located in the Indian Ocean, situated in the Arabian Sea. Male is the capital and most populated city, traditionally called the “King’s Island” for its central location. Maldivian rufiyaa is the currency of the Maldives. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih is the current President of the Maldives.

Gibraltar poised to become first cryptocurrency hub

- Gibraltar, once seen as a tax haven, will start a new life as a global hub for cryptocurrency trading. The British overseas territory is reviewing a proposal for blockchain firm Valereum to acquire the Gibraltar Stock Exchange, which would allow the territory to serve as a platform to trade bitcoin and dogecoin alongside traditional bonds.
- Gibraltar is a British Overseas Territory located at the southern tip of the Iberian Peninsula. It has an area of 6.7 km² and is bordered to the north by Spain.

World’s First ‘Dual-Mode Vehicle’ To Begin Operating In Japan

- The world’s first dual-mode vehicle, equally at home on road and rail, is set to make its public debut in the town of Kaiyo in Japan’s Tokushima prefecture.
- The DMV looks like a minibus and runs on normal rubber tyres on the road. But when it arrives at an interchange, steel wheels descend from the vehicle’s underbelly onto the rail track, effectively turning it into a train carriage. The train wheels lift the front tyres off the track while the rear wheels stay down to propel the DMV onto the railway.

Naruhito is the Emperor of Japan. He acceded to the Chrysanthemum Throne on 1 May 2019, beginning the Reiwa era, following the abdication of his father, Emperor Akihito, on 30 April 2019. He is the 126th monarch according to Japan’s traditional order of succession. Tokyo is the capital city of Japan and yen is the official currency of Japan and it is the third most traded currency in the foreign exchange market after the United States dollar and the euro. Fumio Kishida is the current Prime Minister of Japan since 4 October 2021. He has also served as President of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) since 29 September 2021.

National Museum of Egyptian Civilization to Host Egypt’s First Ever “World Art Forum”

- In January 2022, the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization is scheduled to host the largest international contemporary art event, the World Art Forum (WAF). The WAF is the first of its kind, and adopts Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the center point of its mission.
- The event will take place from 15 January through 19 January, under the auspices of the Ministries of Culture, Planning and Economic Development, Tourism and Antiquities, Emigration and Expatriate Affairs, and Environment and Cairo’s Department of Tourism.
- The World Art Form will be held in partnership with the United Nations Representative Office in Egypt, the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization, and the New York International Contemporary Art Society. Organized by Sheranda World Art and Jupiter Commz, the event aims to marry SDGs and contemporary art in line with, and in celebration of, Egypt’s 2030 Vision.

Egypt is a transcontinental country spanning the northeast corner of Africa and the Sinai Peninsula of Western Asia. It is bordered by the Mediterranean Sea to the north, the Gaza Strip (Palestine) and Israel to the northeast, the Red Sea to the east, Sudan to the south, and Libya to the west. Cairo is Egypt’s capital and largest city. Abdel Fattah el-Sisi is the current President of Egypt since 2014. Mostafa Kamal Madbouly is the current Prime Minister of Egypt. The Egyptian pound is the currency of Egypt.

UAE issues first civil marriage license for non-Muslim couple

- The UAE issued its first civil marriage license for a non-Muslim couple, as the Gulf country seeks to keep its edge over regional competitors. The United Arab Emirates – where foreigners make up 90 percent of the approximately 10-million population – has been amending its laws to present itself as a modernising force in a largely conservative region.

- **Civil marriage in the Middle East, the birthplace of Islam, Christianity and Judaism, is uncommon and usually conducted under a religious authority of one of the three monotheistic beliefs.** Civil marriages are allowed in Tunisia and Algeria.

Abu Dhabi is the capital and the second most populous city of the United Arab Emirates (the most populous being Dubai), and also capital of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, the largest of the UAE's seven emirates. United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a federal sovereign absolute monarchy in Western Asia. Khalifa Al Nahyan is the current President of the United Arab Emirates. Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum is the Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Ruler of the Emirate of Dubai. United Arab Emirates dirham is the currency of the United Arab Emirates. It is bordered by Saudi Arabia to the west and south and by Oman to the east and northeast. The land border with Qatar in the Khawr al Udayd area is a source of ongoing dispute.

Pakistan sets up first-ever body of Hindu leaders to take care of minority community's temples

- **Pakistan announced that it has set up a first-ever body of Hindu leaders to take care of the minority community's temples in the Muslim-majority country.** The Ministry of Religious Affairs constituted the Pakistan Hindu Mandir Management Committee on the pattern of the already working Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee.
- **The committee comprising Dewan Chand Chawla, Haroon Sarab Dayal, Mohandas, Naranjan Kumar, Megha Arora, Amit Shadani, Ashok Kumar, Versi Mill Dewani and Amar Nath Randhawa will be headed by Krishna Sharma.**

Pakistan is a country in South Asia. It is the world's fifth-most populous country, with a population of almost 227 million, and has the world's second-largest Muslim population after Indonesia. It has a 1,046-kilometre (650-mile) coastline along the Arabian Sea and Gulf of Oman in the south, and is bordered by India to the east, Afghanistan to the west, Iran to the southwest, and China to the northeast. It is separated narrowly from Tajikistan by Afghanistan's Wakhan Corridor in the north, and also shares a maritime border with Oman. Islamabad is the capital city of Pakistan. Imran Khan is a Pakistani politician and former cricketer who is the current Prime Minister of Pakistan. Khan was an international cricketer and captain of the Pakistan national cricket team, which he led to victory in the 1992 Cricket World Cup. Arif-ur-Rehman Alvi is serving as the current President of Pakistan. The Pakistani rupee has been the official currency of Pakistan.

Shanghai opens two new lines on longest metro in world

- **The two new lines took the total length of the city's metro network to 831 km (516 miles).** The new lines bring the total number of fully automatic driverless metro lines in the city to five, which will operate on the length of 167 km (103 miles).
- **Shanghai has maintained its position as the city with the largest Metro network in the world, with the opening of two driverless lines—Line 14 and Phase One of Line 18.**

Dubai govt first in world to turn 100% paperless

- **Establishing itself as a leading digital capital, Dubai has become the world's first paperless government,** announced Emirate's Crown Prince Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum.
- **The emirate has achieved the objectives of the 'Dubai Paperless Strategy', which was launched in 2018, added Sheikh Hamdan.** "The achievement of this target marks the beginning of a new stage in Dubai's journey to digitise life in all its aspects a journey rooted in innovation, creativity and a focus on the future."

Area and volume of glaciers in Himalayan region is declining: Reports

- **In Nepal, the latest report on climate change has revealed that the area and volume of glaciers in the Himalayan region is declining.** Transparency International Nepal in collaboration with other organizations conducted the research and the report was made public in Kathmandu.

- The researchers looked into the **impact of climate change on water resources in Nepal’s mountainous region and in the lower coastal regions**. The latest study has revealed the findings of an earlier study report that **the area of glaciers in Nepal decreased by about 24 percent from 1977 to 2010**.
- It also revealed that **the height of the Imja and Lhotse glaciers in the Khumbu region of Nepal decreased from 1970 to 2007**. **The risk of flooding caused by glacial bursting has also increased**. The study has also brought out the fact that **35 glaciers have burst from the Nepal mountain range so far**.

Nepal is a landlocked country in South Asia. Nepal has a diverse geography, including **fertile plains, subalpine forested hills, and eight of the world’s ten tallest mountains, including Mount Everest, the highest point on Earth**. Nepal is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-cultural state, with Nepali as the official language. Kathmandu is the nation’s capital and the largest city. **The name “Nepal” is first recorded in texts from the Vedic period of the Indian subcontinent, the era in ancient Nepal when Hinduism was founded, the predominant religion of the country**. **The Constitution of Nepal, adopted in 2015, affirms Nepal as a secular federal parliamentary republic divided into seven provinces**. **Sher Bahadur Deuba is serving as the Prime Minister of Nepal since 13 July 2021**. **Bidya Devi Bhandari is serving as the second president of Nepal, in office since 28 October 2015**. **She is the first woman to hold the office in the country**. **Nepalese rupee is the official currency of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal**.

U.S. appoints 2 women diplomats to represent Washington in Afghanistan

- **The U.S. has appointed two women diplomats to senior posts representing Washington in Afghanistan**. **Rina Amiri has been appointed as a special envoy for Afghan women, girls, and human rights**.
- She has spent two decades advising governments, the UN, and think tanks on issues related to Afghanistan. Under former US President Barack Obama, she served as a senior adviser to the US special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. **Stephenie Foster, from the US State Department, will be the new senior adviser for women and girls to US operations to evacuate and resettle Afghans at risk**.

Germany shuts down three of its six nuclear power plants

- **Germany has shut down three of its six nuclear power plants, as part of the country’s phase-out of nuclear energy and turned its focus to renewables**. The government decided to **speed up the phasing out of nuclear power following Japan’s Fukushima reactor meltdown in 2011 when an earthquake and tsunami destroyed the coastal plant in the world’s worst nuclear disaster since Chernobyl in 1986**.
- **The plants in Brokdorf in the northern state of Schleswig-Holstein, Grohnde in Lower Saxony and Unit C at Gundremmingen in Bavaria in the south shut down after three and half decades in operation**. **The last three nuclear power plants - Isar-2, Emsland and Neckarwestheim-II - will be turned off by the end of 2022**. **The six nuclear power plants contributed to around 12 per cent of electricity production in Germany in 2021**. **The share of renewable energy was almost 41 per cent, with coal generating just under 28 per cent and gas around 15 per cent**. **Germany aims to make renewables meet 80 per cent of power demand by 2030 by expanding wind and solar power infrastructure**.

Germany is a country in Central Europe. It is the **second-most populous country in Europe after Russia, and the most populous member state of the European Union**. Germany is situated between the Baltic and North seas to the north, and the Alps to the south; It borders Denmark to the north, Poland and the Czechia to the east, Austria and Switzerland to the south, and France, Luxembourg, Belgium, and the Netherlands to the west. **The nation’s capital and largest city is Berlin, and its financial centre is Frankfurt; the largest urban area is the Ruhr**. **Frank-Walter Steinmeier is serving as President of Germany since 19 March 2017**. **Angela Dorothea Merkel has served as the chancellor of Germany since 2005 to 8 December 2021**. **Olaf Scholz is a German politician serving as chancellor of Germany since 8 December 2021**. **Euro is it’s official currency**.

ECONOMY AND FINANCE



Economy News

GIFT city emerging India's first Greenfield smart city

- Now operational with more than 200 entities which have set up their offices where more than 12,000 people are working, the **Gujarat International Finance Tec City (GIFT City)** is **India's first and only International Financial Services Centre (IFSC)** where banks, stock exchanges and financial services firms have set up their global operations.
- Around seven km from Gujarat's capital Gandhinagar, **on the banks of the Sabarmati river in approximately 886 acres, once a barren land along the river is now emerging as the country's first greenfield integrated city** — a dream project Prime Minister Narendra Modi had envisaged as Chief Minister.

Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) is an **under-construction central business district in Gandhinagar in Gujarat, India.** It is **India's first operational greenfield smart city** and international financial services center, which the Government of Gujarat promoted as a greenfield project, **The city is located on the banks of the Sabarmati River** and is around 12 km from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport.

Dubai to host Middle East's first India Global Forum

- **India-based businesses are gearing up for their first Middle East edition of India Global Forum Dubai.** The event will be focusing on unicorns and their global ambitions. The forum will host **250 delegates and 20+ founders and senior leaders of Indian and UAE Unicorns participating.**
- **The forum is endorsed by the UAE and Indian governments.** Co-hosts are the Consul General of India in Dubai and the Embassy of UAE in New Delhi. India's Ministry of External Affairs and Invest India are its Supporting Partners. The Dubai based Indian Business & Professional Council are Business Association Partners.

Time-Travelling Currency: World's First Chinese Banknote NFT Series Launched

- Banking on their two significant inventions - **papermaking and printing** - the Chinese developed, arguably, the world's first currency in the 7th century during the time of the Tang dynasty.
- It was **only six centuries later that Europe developed its own paper money, largely owing to the discoveries of explorers such as Marco Polo** who brought the knowledge of many technologies of the Orient to the West. And now, **in the 21st century, China has scored another first when it comes to currencies.**
- **IZBLU Labs, a digital arts hub that promotes Chinese heritage and culture through blockchain technology, launched the Time Travel X Banknote NFT series** - a project that brings to life authentic and antique, rare Chinese banknotes from the country's past - in September 2021. **Each animated NFT note is beautifully designed, replete with Chinese mottos, symbols, landmarks and period-specific imagery that offer one a glimpse into China's rich history and culture.**

China is a country in East Asia and the world's most populous country, with a population of around 1.404 billion. Beijing is the capital of the People's Republic of China. Xi Jinping is serving as president of the People's Republic of China. National People's Congress is the national legislature of the People's Republic of

China. With 2,980 members in 2018, it is the largest parliamentary body in the world. China's currency yuan joins the International Monetary Fund's basket of reserve currencies. China claims sovereignty over all of the South China Sea, a huge source of hydrocarbons. However, several ASEAN member countries, including Vietnam, Philippines and Brunei, have made counterclaims. Chinese claims in the South China Sea are described in part by the nine-dash line. China and India are the two neighbouring countries in Asia. India shares 3488 km of border with China that runs along the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh. The Belt and Road Initiative, known in Chinese and formerly in English as One Belt One Road or OBOR for short, is a global infrastructure development strategy adopted by the Chinese government in 2013 to invest in nearly 70 countries and international organizations.

Gujarat displaces Maharashtra to become largest manufacturing hub in country

- Gujarat has pipped Maharashtra to emerge the largest manufacturing hub in the country, with the former's Gross Value Addition (GVA) in manufacturing growing 15.9 per cent annually on average between FY12 and FY20 to touch Rs 5.11 lakh crore, according to the data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- Maharashtra's annual growth rate during the period was 7.5 per cent per annum, taking the state's total manufacturing GVA to Rs 4.34 lakh crore in FY20. It continues to lead as the nation's biggest services hub.
- The worst performers among states, which were already among the top 10 manufacturing ones during the period, were Rajasthan, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, with average annual growth rates of 3.8 per cent, 5.5 per cent and 6.9 per cent, respectively.
- GVA is essentially GDP minus net product taxes and reflects growth in supply of goods and services. The other states with the highest manufacturing GVA were Tamil Nadu at Rs 3.43 lakh crore, Karnataka at Rs 2.1 lakh crore and Uttar Pradesh at Rs 1.87 lakh crore

Gita Gopinath: India-born economist who is set to be IMF's number two

- Chief economist Gita Gopinath will become the number two official at the Washington-based crisis lender IMF next month.
- The India-born economist will succeed Geoffrey Okamoto as first deputy managing director, serving under IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva. For the first time, IMF will have two women holding the top leadership roles.
- The elevation to the post of first deputy managing director (FDMD) came just months after Gopinath had said she intended to re-join Harvard University in January 2022 to retain her tenured faculty post after completing three years at the IMF.
- As its chief economist, Gopinath led the IMF's research department through the unprecedented Covid-19 crisis and a global economic meltdown, the worst peacetime debacle since the Great Depression. Gopinath joined the IMF at the start of 2019, replacing Maury Obstfeld, after having taught in Harvard's economics department since 2005.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an organization of 190 countries, working to foster global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth, and reduce poverty around the world. Created in 1945, the IMF is governed by and accountable to the 190 countries that make up its near-global membership. Ms. Kristalina Georgieva, from Bulgaria, is Managing Director and Chairman of the Executive Board of International Monetary Fund (IMF) from October 1, 2019. Prominent Indian-American economist Gita Gopinath has joined as the chief economist of the International Monetary Fund, becoming the first woman to occupy the top post at the global lender. The latest currency that was added to the basket of currencies by the International Monetary Fund to determine the value of XDR is the Chinese renminbi in 2016. The other international currencies in the basket of currencies are British Pound, Japanese Yen, US Dollar, and Euro. XDR is the currency code of Special Drawing Rights. Andorra has joined the International Monetary Fund (IMF), to become its 190th member.

India ‘very unequal’, top 10% hold 57% of national income: Inequality Report

- India stands out as a “poor and very unequal country, with an affluent elite”, where the top 10 per cent holds 57 per cent of the total national income while the bottom 50 per cent’s share is just 13 per cent in 2021, according to the latest World Inequality Report 2022.
- The report has also flagged a drop in global income during 2020, with about half of the dip in rich countries and the rest in low-income and emerging regions. This is attributed primarily due to the impact of “South and Southeast Asia, and more precisely” India.
- “When India is removed from the analysis, it appears that the global bottom 50 per cent income share actually slightly increased in 2020,” states the report authored by economist and co-director of the World Inequality Lab, Lucas Chancel, along with economists Thomas Piketty, Emmanuel Saez and Gabriel Zucman.
- “While the top 10 per cent and top 1 per cent hold respectively 57 per cent and 22 per cent of total national income, the bottom 50 per cent share has gone down to 13 per cent. India stands out as a poor and very unequal country, with an affluent elite,” the report states.
- According to the report, India’s middle class is relatively poor with an average wealth of only Rs 7,23,930 or 29.5 per cent of the total national income, as compared with the top 10 per cent and 1 per cent who own 65 per cent (Rs 63,54,070) and 33 per cent (Rs 3,24,49,360), respectively.
- The average annual national income of the Indian adult population is Rs 2,04,200 in 2021. The bottom 50 per cent earned Rs 53,610, while the top 10 per cent earned over 20 times more (Rs 11,66,520), the report states. The average household wealth in India is Rs 9,83,010, with the bottom 50 per cent owning almost nothing, with an average wealth of 6 per cent of the total Rs 66,280.
- The share of the top 10% and bottom 50% in pre-tax national income has remained broadly constant since 2014. The quality of inequality data released by the government has seriously deteriorated, making it particularly difficult to assess recent inequality changes, the report says.
- As per the recent Multi-dimensional Poverty Index prepared by Niti Aayog, one in every four people in India was multi-dimensionally poor. Bihar has the highest such proportion (51.91%), followed by Jharkhand (42.16%) and Uttar Pradesh (37.79%).

Large emerging economies such as China and India experienced faster increases than wealthy countries after they transitioned away from communism (in China and Russia) or from a highly regulated economic system (in India). In India, private wealth increased from 290% in 1980 to 560% in 2020. Global inequalities seem to be about as great today as they were at the peak of Western imperialism in the early 20th century, the report said.

India’s mission to WTO inks MoU with 2 institutes for capacity building, research in international trade law

- The government said that India’s permanent mission to the World Trade Organization, the Centre for Trade and Investment Law (CTIL) of the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, and the Centre for Trade and Economic Integration of The Graduate Institute, Geneva have signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding to begin collaboration towards research and capacity-building in the field of international trade law and policy.
- The MoU seeks to provide academic and research opportunities to the professional staff of CTIL and the officials of the Indian government in the field of international trade and investment law, and would establish collaboration channels between CTIL and CTEI while the mission will play a facilitative role for activities. The tripartite MoU establishes collaboration channels between CTIL and CTEI while the PMI will play a key facilitative role for activities under the MoU.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is an intergovernmental organization that regulates and facilitates international trade between nations. Governments use the organization to establish, revise, and enforce the rules that govern international trade. It officially commenced operations on 1 January 1995, pursuant to the 1994

Marrakesh Agreement, thus replacing the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) that had been established in 1948. The WTO is the world's largest international economic organization, with 164 member states representing over 98% of global trade and global GDP. The WTO facilitates trade in goods, services and intellectual property among participating countries by providing a framework for negotiating trade agreements, which usually aim to reduce or eliminate tariffs, quotas, and other restrictions; these agreements are signed by representatives of member governments and ratified by their legislatures. The WTO also administers independent dispute resolution for enforcing participants' adherence to trade agreements and resolving trade-related disputes. The organization prohibits discrimination between trading partners, but provides exceptions for environmental protection, national security, and other important goals. The WTO is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is a Nigerian-American economist, fair trade leader, environmental sustainability advocate, human welfare champion, sustainable finance maven and global development expert. Since March 2021, Okonjo-Iweala has been serving as Director-General of the World Trade Organization. Notably, she is the first woman and first African to lead the World Trade Organization as Director-General.

HAL, BEL, Indian Ordnance Factories among top 100 global arms manufacturers in 2020

- Three companies from India have been included in the top 100 global companies making arms, weapons, military planes, and equipment. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and Indian Ordnance Factories were among the top 100 global arms-producing and military services companies in 2020, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) said.
- The US ranks first with 54% and China is second with 13%. England is in third and Russia in fourth place. The arms sales of HAL, ranked 42nd, and BEL, ranked 66th, increased by 1.5 per cent and 4.0 per cent.
- According to the SIPRI report, the US accounts for 54% of the total arms trade globally. China's participation is 13%, England's is 07, and Russia's is 05%. South Korea and India have an equal share (1.2%).
- According to the SIPRI report for the year 2020, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is ranked 42nd in the list of the world's 100 largest arms companies, Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) is at 60th and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) is at 66th position.
- The report mentions that despite the Coronavirus pandemic, the global arms market has been flourishing as there has been no decrease in the arms trade worldwide. Rather there was an increase of 1.3% as compared to 2019.

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) is an international institute based in Stockholm. It was founded in 1966 and provides data, analysis and recommendations for armed conflict, military expenditure and arms trade as well as disarmament and arms control. The research is based on open sources and is directed to decision-makers, researchers, media and the interested public.

India Ranked Fourth Most Powerful Country in Asia Power Index 2021

- India has risen as the fourth most powerful country in Asia, according to a report by Lowy Institute Asia Power Index 2021. It has been ranked fourth among the 26 countries and territories in Indo-Pacific for comprehensive power.
- In terms of points rated by the Index, in 2021, India had the greatest gains in 'resilience' (+1.7) and has improved in 'military capability' (+0.5). However, it lost on the parameters of 'cultural influence' (-7.9), 'economic relationships' (-5.1), 'diplomatic influence' (-2.4), 'defence networks' (-2.1) and 'economic capability' (-1.3) as compared to last year.
- Lowy Institute is an independent think tank that releases the Asia Power Index by assessing the resources and influence to rank the relative power of states in the Indo-Pacific region. Lowy Institute has been releasing this index every year since 2018.
- According to Lowy's report, India performs best in future resources measures and stands behind the US and China. However, it lost growth potential largely due to "the impact of the coronavirus pandemic has led to a diminished economic forecast for 2030."

- As per the report, India exerts less influence than expected in the region due to its negative power gap score. **As India and Japan, are lagging behind, Asia is becoming more and more ‘bipolar’ as the US and China continue to hold more power in the region.**

World Talent Ranking: European countries top list

- **A global ranking of 63 countries has found that investing in education** at all levels boosts competitiveness by developing and attracting talent. **Meanwhile India’s ranking in IMD competitive ranking slipped from 59 in 2019 to 62 in 2020.** India’s performances in various factors are 63 in Investment and Development, 55 in Appeal, 25 in Readiness and 62 is India’s overall performance.
- **The IMD World Talent Ranking scores countries across three factors of Investment & Development, Readiness and Appeal.** The Appeal factor evaluates the extent to which an economy attracts foreign and retains local talent. And the Readiness factor measures the quality of the skills and competencies that are available in a country’s talent pool.
- **International Institute for Management Development (IMD) is a business education school based in Switzerland.** The Institute for Management Development’s (IMD) World Competitiveness Center take a three-pronged approach in measuring talent in economies. **Switzerland balances a high-quality education system that earns top marks** for those being channeled into university and for those embarking on apprenticeships.

North India’s first Centre of Entrepreneurship in Medi Electronics and Health Informatics to start operations in Lucknow

- Union Minister of State, Ministry of Electronics and IT, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Rajeev Chandrasekhar arrived at Lucknow and **inaugurated North India’s maiden Centre of Entrepreneurship – “MedTech” at the SG - PGI, Lucknow.**
- The centre of entrepreneurship shall **provide state of the art facilities to Startups in the field of Medi electronics and health informatics providing impetus to the startup culture in the state.** The Centre of Excellence shall provide plug and play facilities, co-working/incubation space, High Speed Internet (500MBPS), Medi electronics & Health informatics &IoT Labs, Support on Intellectual Property Rights, Assistance for Marketing and Network Outreach amongst other facilities.
- **The newly built facility, in partnership with Software technology Park of India, Ministry of Electronics and IT and Government of Uttar Pradesh is strategically housed at the PGI Medical facility, providing suitable environment for the Medi electronics Startups to thrive.**

20-digit LEI must for cross-border transactions soon

- Starting October next year, **companies will have to quote the legal entity identifier (LEI) number so as to undertaking cross-border transactions of Rs 50 crore or more.**
- **The LEI is a 20-digit number used to uniquely identify parties to financial transactions globally to improve the quality and accuracy of financial data systems.**
- The identifier has been **introduced by the central bank in a phased manner for participants in the over-the-counter (OTC) derivative, non-derivative markets,** large corporate borrowers and large value transactions in centralised payment systems.
- **“In order to further harness the benefits of LEI, it has been decided that AD Category I banks, with effect from October 1, 2022, shall obtain the LEI number from the resident entities (non-individuals) undertaking capital or current account transactions of Rs 50 crore and above (per transaction) under FEMA, 1999.”**

Pune district ranks first in export of engineering goods

- **Pune has ranked first in export of engineering goods in a new listing issued by the Government of India.** Between April and September 2021-22, the district reported export of \$3,528.83 million worth of engineering goods, which is the highest in the country.
- **The district has also been identified as a possible export hub for Purandhar figs, grapes, pharmaceutical products, etc.** This initiative has seen export action plans regularly prepared for districts for such identified products and overseas markets. This would include support to local exporters and manufacturers for reaching potential buyers outside India.

India's first Green Hydrogen Microgrid Projects to be set up in Andhra Pradesh

- **India's first Green Hydrogen Microgrid Projects to be set up at Simhadri near Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. National Thermal Power Corporation Limited, NTPC said, the projects will be a precursor to large-scale hydrogen energy storage projects and would be useful for studying and deploying multiple microgrids in various off-grid and strategic locations of the country.**
- **NTPC added the hydrogen produced during sunshine hours will be stored at high pressure and electrified using a 50 Kilo Watt Solid Oxide Fuel Cell.**

Billionaires Index: Gautam Adani slips by a spot, is 14th richest in world

- **Billionaire Gautam Adani was surpassed by China's Zhong Shanshan as the 13th wealthiest person in the world, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.**
- **The latest Bloomberg Index also shows that US-South African business magnate Elon Musk remains the world's wealthiest person, followed by Jeff Bezos, Bernard Arnault, Bill Gates and Larry Page, in that order. Mark Zuckerberg (6), Sergey Brin (7), Steve Balmer (8), Larry Ellison (9) and Warren Buffett round off the top 10.**
- **The list is dominated by Americans, with 13 out of top 20, including 9 out of top 10 (Arnault is French) being from the United States. Besides Arnault, Ambani, Shanshan and Adani, the other non-Americans in the top 20 are France's Françoise Meyers (11), Mexican Carlos Slim (15) and Amancio Ortega (17) from Spain.**
- **Azim Premji, ranked 33, is the third Indian on the rankings. Shiv Nadar is next at 49, while Radhakishan Damani (64) and Laxmi Mittal (91) are also featured. Serum Institute of India (SII) founder-MD Cyrus Poonawalla, ranked 133, is also among 20 Indians on the Index.**

IFSCA sets up panel for creating framework for transfer of stressed loan

- **The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) sets up a committee for creating a framework for transfer of stressed loans from domestic lenders to financial institutions in IFSC. Former executive director of RBI G Padmanabhan would be chairing the committee which will also include representative from law firm and other market participants possessing expertise in banking and legal issues.**
- **"The committee has been mandated to examine the provisions of the RBI directions pertaining to transfer of stressed loans by lending institutions to entities in IFSCA, identify areas/issues of the directions which require further clarification from RBI, suggest both the contents of the framework to be put in place by IFSCA to enable such transfers and amendments to the RBI directions to make it easier to effect such transfers,"**

The central government has established International Financial Services Centres Authority to regulate all financial services in International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs) with headquarters in Gandhinagar (Gujarat).

Davos World Economic Forum called off due to Covid

- **The planned World Economic Forum in the Swiss mountain resort of Davos has been called off due to surging cases of the Omicron variant of Covid-19, citing communication from organisers to delegates.**

The World Economic Forum (WEF), based in Cologny, Geneva Canton, Switzerland, is an international NGO, founded on 24 January 1971 by Klaus Schwab. The foundation, which is mostly funded by its 1,000 member companies as well as public subsidies, views its own mission as "improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic, and other leaders of society to shape global, regional, and industry agendas". The WEF is mostly known for its annual meeting at the end of January in Davos, a mountain resort in Graubünden, in the eastern Alps region of Switzerland.

India's newest carrier Akasa Air unveils brand logo

- **Rakesh Jhunjhunwala-backed Akasa Air unveiled its brand logo which it said has been inspired by the element of the sky.**

- “The Rising A symbolises the warmth of the sun, the effortless flight of a bird, and the dependability of an aircraft wing. Always moving upwards. Always inspiring to rise. The logo of the new budget carrier is A, and the brand slogan of the company is ‘it’s your sky’.

India looks set to overtake France next year, Britain in 2023 to regain its place as world’s 6th biggest economy

- **India looks set to overtake France next year and then Britain in 2023 to regain its place as the world’s sixth biggest economy.** The British consultancy CEBR said the world’s economic output will exceed 100 trillion dollar for the first time next year and it will take China a little longer than previously thought to overtake the United States as the No.1 economy.
- **CEBR predicted China will become the world’s top economy in dollar terms in 2030**, two years later than forecast in last year’s World Economic League Table report. CEBR deputy chairman Douglas McWilliams said, the important issue for the 2020s is how the world economies cope with inflation, which has now reached 6.8 per cent in the U.S.
- The report showed **Germany was on track to overtake Japan in terms of economic output in 2033. Russia could become a Top 10 economy by 2036 and Indonesia looks on track for ninth place in 2034.**

Metaverse Dubai introduces the World’s First Virtual Mega City based on Real-world map of Dubai Prime Areas

- “Metaverse Dubai is stepping up the game to amaze new travelers on a wider scale by becoming the first global virtual NFT platform based on a real-world map.
- **It upholds the concepts of decentralization and NFTs originating from blockchain technology while adding newer infrastructure and more advanced features than its forerunner.”**

5G services to roll out in India’s four metros, selected cities in 2022

- **The Fifth Generation or 5G telecom services are set to be rolled out in selected cities in India in 2022.** The cities which are set to get the 5G telecom services in 2022 include Gurugram, Bangalore, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chandigarh, Delhi, Jamnagar, Ahmadabad, Chennai, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Pune, and Gandhinagar.
- **Leading telecom service providers Bharti Airtel, Reliance Jio and Vodafone Idea, have established 5G trials sites in these cities.** “These Metros and big cities would be the first places for launch of 5G services in the country.

The fifth generation is the latest upgrade in the long-term evolution (LTE) mobile broadband networks. While 4G was a great leap forward, allowing people to stream music and video on the go, **5G is designed to connect many more types of devices than smartphones and offers far higher speed and capacity.** The government is also involved actively to facilitate the rollout of 5G services. **The Department of Telecom has roped in leading research institutions for the development and testing of 5G technology.** Eight agencies - Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay, IIT Delhi, IIT Hyderabad, IIT Madras, IIT Kanpur, Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore, Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering & Research (SAMEER), and Centre of Excellence in Wireless Technology (CEWiT) - are involved in the research project called ‘Indigenous 5G Test bed project’. **The Indigenous 5G Test bed project started in 2018 and is set to be completed by December 31, 2021.** The project has been funded by the Department of Telecom. The department has spent Rs224 crore on this project.

Banks in News

India's first-ever standalone metal debit card's launch announced

- **IDFC FIRST Bank** announced the **launch of FIRST Private Infinite, the country's first-ever standalone metal debit card, in partnership with Visa**, the global leader in digital payments. **FIRST Private Infinite is a lifetime free card designed specifically for customers** who are part of the Bank's FIRST Private program, a premium savings and wealth offering.
- **The FIRST Private program offers an unrivalled banking and investment experience** to customers and comes with a range of exceptional investment, banking, lifestyle and wellness benefits. **FIRST Private Infinite is crafted from hybrid metal with details etched in silver, created to deliver an exclusive payment experience.** True to its top-of-the-line proposition, the benefits of FIRST Private Infinite debit card are specifically curated for premium cardholders and include complimentary domestic and international lounge access for cardholders and companions.

IDFC First Bank (formerly **IDFC Bank**) is an **Indian private sector bank that forms part of IDFC**, an integrated infrastructure finance company. **The bank started operations on 1 October 2015**, after receiving a universal banking licence from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in July 2015. **V. Vaidyanathan is MD and CEO of IDFC First Bank Ltd and Rajiv B. Lall is the managing director and vice chairman of bank.**

SBI lists \$650 mn green bonds on India INX, Luxembourg Stock Exchange

- **State Bank of India (SBI) listed its \$650-million green bonds simultaneously on the India International Exchange (India INX) and the Luxembourg Stock Exchange.** India INX, the international arm of BSE, had announced its **memorandum of understanding with the Luxembourg Stock Exchange (LuxSE) for cooperation** in financial services industry, maintenance of orderly markets in securities respective country, ESG (environmental, social and governance) and green finance in the local market.

On April 1, 2017, the State Bank of India, which was India's largest bank, merged with five of its associate banks (State Bank of Bikaner & Jaipur, State Bank of Hyderabad, State Bank of Mysore, State Bank of Patiala and State Bank of Travancore), and with the **Bharatiya Mahila Bank.** **Dinesh Kumar Khara is the current chairman of the State Bank of India (SBI).** **Imperial Bank of India was the oldest and the largest commercial bank of the Indian subcontinent, and was subsequently transformed into State Bank of India in 1955.**

Shivalik Small Finance Bank, Indiagold partner to launch India's first loan against digital gold

- **Shivalik Small Finance Bank (SSFB) announced a partnership with fintech firm Indiagold to launch a loan product against digital gold.** Digital gold is an affordable medium to own and save with gold without the trouble of physically handling and storing the asset.
- **"This collaboration will enable customers to use their digital gold balance to avail instant and digital loans up to Rs 60,000.** On repayment of the loan, customers will have an option to either renew the loan or get their gold home delivered".

Shivalik became the first Small Finance Bank in India's history to transition from an Urban Co-operative Bank. The Bank is powered by Infosys Finacle Core Banking and Digital Banking Suite including internet and mobile banking. **Small finance banks are a type of niche banks in India. Banks with a small finance bank license can provide basic banking service of acceptance of deposits and lending.** The aim behind these to provide financial inclusion to sections of the economy not being served by other banks, such as small business units, small and marginal farmers, micro and small industries and unorganised sector entities.

Yes Bank, NPCI Launch Credit Card On RuPay Platform

- **YES Bank announced that it partnered with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to launch a new RuPay co-branded credit cards for customers on the indigenously developed payment platform.**
- **The YES Prosperity Rewards Plus credit card variant - crafted for the private sector lender's YES Prosperity segment, will offer multiple benefits for customers, according to a recent statement shared by YES**

Bank. The credit card will offer rewards points that mount up with every purchase, fuel surcharge waiver, accelerated rewards points on YES Cart and merchant offers enabled by the private bank's collaboration with NPCI.

- **NPCI has developed the RuPay card payment network.** Additionally, a variety of deals and special offers across various merchant categories are available for YES Bank credit card holders. **The deals are aimed at increasing customer's savings.**

Yes Bank Limited is an Indian private sector bank headquartered in Mumbai, India and was founded by Rana Kapoor and Ashok Kapur in 2004. It offers wide range of differentiated products for corporate and retail customers through retail banking and asset management services. **On 5 March 2020, in an attempt to avoid the collapse of the bank, which had an excessive amount of bad loans, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) took control of it. RBI later reconstructed the board and named Prashant Kumar, former chief financial officer and deputy managing director of State Bank of India, as MD & CEO of Yes Bank, along with Sunil Mehta, former non-executive chairman of Punjab National Bank, as Yes Bank's non-executive chairman.**

Paytm Payments Bank gets RBI nod to function as scheduled payments bank

- **Paytm Payments Bank has gained central bank approval to function as a scheduled payments bank helping it to expand its financial services operations.**
- **As a scheduled payments bank, Paytm Payments can participate in government and companies' request for proposals, primary auctions, fixed-rate and variable rate repos, and reverse repos, along with participation in Marginal Standing Facility. It will also be eligible to be a partner in government-run financial inclusion schemes.**

Paytm ("pay through mobile") is an Indian multinational technology company that specialises in digital wallet, e-commerce, payment system and financial technology company, based in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India. **Paytm was founded in August 2010 with an initial investment of \$2 million by its founder Vijay Shekhar Sharma in Noida, a region adjacent to India's capital New Delhi. It started off as a prepaid mobile and DTH recharge platform, and later added data card, postpaid mobile and landline bill payments in 2013.**

RBI allows LIC to hold 9.99% stake in IndusInd Bank

- **The Reserve Bank of India has approved the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) to raise its stake in IndusInd Bank by up to 9.99 per cent. "The bank has received an intimation from the RBI on December 9 that it has granted its approval to Life Insurance Corporation, shareholder of the bank, who holds 4.95 per cent of the capital of the bank, to acquire up to 9.99 per cent of the total issued capital,".**
- **It further mentioned this approval is in compliance with the Master Direction on 'Prior Approval for Acquisition of Shares or Voting Rights in Private Sector Banks' dated November 19, 2015, Master Direction on 'Ownership in Private Sector Banks' dated May 12, 2016, regulations of the Securities and Exchange Board of India, the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 and other guidelines/regulations and applicable laws.**
- **Meanwhile, RBI also granted approval to LIC for increasing its holding in Kotak Mahindra Bank up to 9.99 per cent and it is valid for one year. Prior to this, LIC's holding in Kotak Mahindra Bank stood at 4.96 per cent as of September 30 and the insurance giant had also raised its stake in the private lender by 0.73 percent 3.18 percent in 2020.**

Life Insurance Corporation of India (abbreviated as LIC) is an Indian government owned insurance and investment corporation under the ownership of Ministry of Finance, Government of India. The Life insurance Corporation of India was **established on September 1, 1956, when the Parliament of India passed the Life Insurance of India Act that nationalized the insurance industry in India. Over 245 insurance companies and provident societies were merged to create the state-owned Life Insurance Corporation of India. It is based in Mumbai.**

Bank of Baroda launches bob World Wave, a wearable payment solution

- **Bank of Baroda (BOB) has joined hands with National Payments Corporations of India (NPCI) launched bob World Wave, a wearable line of products for payments, integrated with a complete health ecosystem.**

- A bob World Wave wearable device will allow customers to monitor their SpO₂, body temperature, heart rate and blood pressure. With bob World Wave, BOB is providing an exclusive 3-months free wellness package along with a personal health coach, doctor tele-consultation and interactive video coaching.
- The device will provide contactless payments of up to ₹5,000 in all NFC enabled PoS devices. Customers can do contactless payment above ₹5,000 using a PIN.

Bank of Baroda (BOB) is an Indian nationalised banking and financial services company. It is under the ownership of Ministry of Finance. It is the fourth largest nationalised bank in India. The government of India announced the merger of Bank of Baroda, Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank on September 17, 2018, to create the country's second largest lender.

IndusInd Bank, NPCI tie-up to offer remittances to India using UPI IDs

- IndusInd Bank has joined hands with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) for offering real-time cross-border remittances to India using UPI IDs for its Money Transfer Operator (MTO) partners.
- The private sector bank has become the first Indian bank to go live on UPI for Cross Border Payments/NRI Remittances. Under this arrangement, the MTOs will be using the IndusInd Bank channel to connect with NPCI's UPI payment systems for validation and cross-border payment settlement into beneficiary accounts.

IndusInd Bank Limited is a new-generation Indian bank headquartered in Pune. The bank offers commercial, transactional and electronic banking products and services. IndusInd Bank was inaugurated in April 1994 by then Union Finance Minister Manmohan Singh. IndusInd Bank is the first among the new-generation private banks in India.

Bank of Baroda achieves top position in digital payments for 2020-21

- Bank of Baroda announced that it has won the number one position in overall digital transactions among large banks for FY20-21.
- The bank showed the exceptional growth of digital payment transactions achievement and was felicitated by the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), Govt. of India at the Digital Payments Utsav.

RBL Bank MD and CEO Vishwavir Ahuja steps down, Rajeev Ahuja takes over

- The Board of Directors of the Bank at its meeting accepted the request of Mr Vishwavir Ahuja to proceed on leave with immediate effect.
- The Board appointed Rajeev Ahuja (currently the Executive Director) as interim Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of the Bank with immediate effect, subject to the regulatory and other approvals.

RBL Bank, formerly known as Ratnakar Bank, is an Indian private sector bank headquartered in Mumbai and founded in 1943. It offers services across six verticals: corporate and institutional banking, commercial banking, branch and business banking, retail assets, development banking and financial inclusion, treasury and financial market operations.

IndusInd Bank announces launch of 'green fixed deposits'

- IndusInd Bank has announced the launch of 'green fixed deposits', whereby the deposit proceeds will be used to finance projects and firms supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These deposits will be offered to both retail and corporate customers.
- The Bank will use the proceeds from these deposits to finance a wide array of sectors falling under the SDG category including, energy efficiency, renewable energy, green transport, sustainable food, agriculture, forestry, waste management and greenhouse gas reduction.

SBI set to embrace new benchmarks in LIBOR transition

- India's largest lender, State Bank of India (SBI) is set to embrace new recommended interest rate benchmarks necessitated as the traditional rate gauge London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR) will cease to exist for its day-to-day businesses and in product pricing.

- All the systems and processes in SBI are aligned to support transactions linked to these Alternate Reference Rates (ARR), the bank said in a release. “LIBOR Transition is a significant financial event for international financial markets”. “As the country’s largest bank, SBI has been assiduously tracking the global developments in the LIBOR space to align with the best practices and has proactively modified its systems and processes to embrace the change from LIBOR to ARR.”

The London Inter-Bank Offered Rate is an interest-rate average calculated from estimates submitted by the leading banks in London. Each bank estimates what it would be charged were it to borrow from other banks. The resulting average rate is usually abbreviated to Libor or LIBOR. It was formerly known as BBA Libor (for British Bankers’ Association Libor or the trademark bba libor) before the responsibility for the administration was transferred to Intercontinental Exchange. It is the primary benchmark, along with the Euribor, for short-term interest rates around the world. Libor was phased out at the end of 2021, and market participants are being encouraged to transition to risk-free interest rates.

SBI to acquire nearly 10 pc stake in India International Clearing Corporation

- State Bank of India will acquire about 10 per cent stake in the India International Clearing Corporation (IICC). IICC is the first international clearing corporation set up at GIFT-IFSC that acts as a central counterparty providing clearing and settlement and risk management services. It clears and settles index and single stock derivatives, currency derivatives and debt securities.

Corporate-promoted NBFCs can have 15% stake in banks, with increase in cap

- Corporate houses, which are not allowed to own a bank, can now pick up 15 per cent stake in commercial banks through their non-banking financial companies (NBFCs).
- This is because the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has allowed non-promoters to hold up to 15 per cent in private sector banks, following the recommendation of an internal working group (IWG) that was set up to review the existing guidelines on ownership and corporate structure for these entities.

India welcomes Egypt as 4th member of BRICS New Development Bank

- India has welcomed Egypt as the fourth new member of BRICS New Development Bank. Bangladesh, UAE, and Uruguay joined in September 2021. Membership expansion enables New Development Bank to position itself as a premier development institution for emerging economies.
- The BRICS brings together five of the largest developing countries of the world, representing 41 per cent of the global population, 24 per cent of the global GDP and 16 per cent of the global trade. “We are delighted to welcome Egypt into NDB’s family. Egypt is one of the world’s fastest-growing countries, a major economy in the African continent and the Middle East region as well as a key player in development finance institutions,” said Marcos Troyjo, President of NDB.

The New Development Bank (NDB), formerly referred to as the BRICS Development Bank, is a multilateral development bank established by the BRICS states (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). According to the Agreement on the NDB, “the Bank shall support public or private projects through loans, guarantees, equity participation and other financial instruments.” Moreover, the NDB “shall cooperate with international organizations and other financial entities, and provide technical assistance for projects to be supported by the Bank.” The initial authorized capital of the bank is \$100 billion divided into 1 million shares having a par value of \$100,000 each. The initial subscribed capital of the NDB is \$50 billion divided into paid-in shares (\$10 billion) and callable shares (\$40 billion). The initial subscribed capital of the bank was equally distributed among the founding members. The Agreement on the NDB specifies that every member will have one vote no one would have any veto powers. The bank is headquartered in Shanghai, China. Marcos Troyjo is President of the New Development Bank (NDB).

Firms in News

Indian tech wizard Parag Agrawal takes over as CEO of Twitter

- **Indian tech wizard Parag Agrawal takes over as CEO of the social media platform Twitter** following the departure of its co-founder CEO. **Twitter co-founder Jack Dorsey has stepped down as chief executive of the company** paving way for the current chief technical officer, **Parag Agrawal, to take over.** Mr Dorsey has been serving as chief executive of both Twitter and payment firm Square.
- **Parag Agrawal, IIT alumnus, joins the likes of Sundar Pichai and Satya Nadella as Indian-origin techies** at the help of the **biggest tech companies of the world.** A **Computer Science and Engineering graduate from IIT Bombay, Agrawal is a Ph.D. from Stanford University.**

Twitter is an American microblogging and social networking service on which users post and interact with messages known as “tweets”. Registered users can post, like, and retweet tweets, but unregistered users can only read them. **Twitter was created by Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams in March 2006 and launched in July of that year.**

IFFCO ranks first among top 300 cooperatives in the world, retains position

- **The Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO) has been ranked ‘number one Cooperative’ among the top 300 cooperatives in the world,** withholding its position from last year.
- **The ranking is based on the ratio of turnover over the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita.** It signifies that IFFCO is contributing significantly to the GDP and economic growth of the nation.
- It also relates the **turnover of the enterprise to the wealth of the country according to the 2021 edition of the 10th Annual World Cooperative Monitor (WCM) report published by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA).** IFFCO has also stepped up to **60th Position in overall Turnover ranking from 65th position in last financial year.**

Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited, also known as IFFCO, is a multi-state cooperative society engaged in the business of manufacturing and marketing of fertilisers headquartered in New Delhi, India. Started in 1967 with 57 member cooperatives, it is today the biggest co-op in the world by turnover on GDP per capita, with around 35,000 member cooperatives reaching over 50 million Indian farmers. With around 19% market share in urea and around 29% market share in complex fertilisers (P2O5 terms) IFFCO is India’s largest fertiliser manufacturer.

Mahindra becomes first Indian automaker to enter Dow Jones Sustainability Index

- **Mumbai-based automotive-to-technology major Mahindra & Mahindra has entered the World Index list of companies in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI) 2021.**
- **Interestingly, of the 5 Indian companies that have featured in the World Index this year, two are Mahindra Group companies – Mahindra & Mahindra and Tech Mahindra of which M&M is the first Indian ‘automobile and components’ company to enter the World Index of DJSI.**

Mahindra & Mahindra Limited is an Indian multinational automotive manufacturing corporation headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra. It was established in 1945 as Muhammad & Mahindra and later renamed as Mahindra and Mahindra. It is one of the largest vehicle manufacturers by production in India. It’s subsidiary Mahindra Tractors is the largest manufacturer of tractors in the world by volume. It is a part of the Mahindra Group, an Indian conglomerate. Anand Gopal Mahindra is the chairman of Mahindra Group.

LIC gets RBI approval to raise stake in Kotak Mahindra Bank

- **Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) has received approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to increase its stake in the Kotak Mahindra Bank.**
- **The approval is to raise LIC’s stake in the bank up to 9.99 per cent from the current 4.96 per cent it has in the private lender.** Prior approval is required from the central bank to make an acquisition in any private banks of more than 5 per cent stake.

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) is an Indian statutory insurance and investment corporation. It is under the ownership of Ministry of Finance. The Life insurance Corporation of India was established on 1 September 1956, when the Parliament of India passed the Life Insurance of India Act that nationalized the insurance industry in India. Over 245 insurance companies and provident societies were merged to create the state-owned Life Insurance Corporation of India. LIC also holds a 51% stake in IDBI Bank, making it the only insurer in India to own a bank, since regulations prohibit insurers from holding more than 15% stake in any company, LIC will have to decide a timeline for paring its stake in IDBI bank.

Jack Dorsey steps down as Twitter CEO, Parag Agrawal to replace him

- Twitter co-founder Jack Dorsey will step down as CEO of the social media platform, the company announced. Twitter's Chief Technology Officer Parag Agrawal, who is an alumnus of IIT-Bombay, will replace outgoing CEO Jack Dorsey, the microblogging site announced. Agrawal has been with Twitter since 2011 and has served as Chief Technology Officer (CTO) since October 2017.

NSE Indices launches new Nifty Bharat Bond index

- The Bharat Bond index series follows a target maturity date structure wherein each index in the series measures the performance of a portfolio of "AAA" rated bonds issued by government owned entities maturing in a specific year.
- Nifty Bharat Bond Index – April 2032- has been launched within the Nifty Bharat Bond index series. NSE Indices launched the first two indices in the Bharat Bond index series with maturities in April 2023 and April 2030, and in July 2020, further two indices with maturities in April 2025 and April 2031 were launched.

National Stock Exchange of India Limited (NSE) is the leading stock exchange of India, located in Mumbai, Maharashtra. It is under the ownership of some leading financial institutions, banks, and insurance companies. NSE was established in 1992 as the first dematerialized electronic exchange in the country. NSE was the first exchange in the country to provide a modern, fully automated screen-based electronic trading system that offered easy trading facilities to investors spread across the length and breadth of the country. Vikram Limaye is the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of NSE.

Uber launched ride-booking via WhatsApp in India

- In a global first, Uber and WhatsApp announced a new partnership in India, wherein customers will be able to book a cab using the ride-share service's official WhatsApp chatbot. The feature has been built on the WhatsApp Business Platform.
- Uber is rolling this out on a pilot basis in Lucknow first and will be expanded to other Indian cities soon. Uber and WhatsApp announced a partnership that allowed people in the country to book a ride via WhatsApp - a global-first initiative by the ride-hailing platform.
- With this integration, riders will no longer need to download or use the Uber app. Everything - from user registration, booking a ride and getting a trip receipt - will be managed within the WhatsApp chat interface.
- The integration is a global-first for Uber, and it will make booking a ride as easy as sending a WhatsApp message, it added. It is being rolled out on a pilot basis in the northern part of Lucknow first and will be expanded to other Indian cities soon.

Uber Technologies, Inc., commonly known as Uber, is an American mobility as a service provider based in San Francisco, with operations in over 900 metropolitan areas worldwide. In 2009, Uber was founded as Ubercab by Garrett Camp, a computer programmer and the co-founder of StumbleUpon, and Travis Kalanick, who sold his Red Swoosh startup for \$19 million in 2007. Its services include ride-hailing, food delivery (Uber Eats and Postmates), package delivery, couriers, freight transportation, electric bicycle and motorized scooter rental via a partnership with Lime, and ferry transport in partnership with local operators. Uber does not own any vehicles; instead, it receives a 25% commission from each booking. Fares are quoted to the customer in advance but vary using a dynamic pricing model based on the local supply and demand at the time of the booking.

Kotak Mahindra Mutual Fund launches India's first Nifty Alpha 50 ETF

- **Kotak Mahindra Mutual Fund** has launched India's first ever Nifty Alpha 50 ETF called the **Kotak Nifty Alpha 50 ETF**. It is an open-ended scheme that will track Nifty Alpha 50 index and gives investors an opportunity to invest in a well-diversified portfolio of stocks with high Alphas.
- According to the fund house, **this ETF can also be used as a tool to balance investors' active portfolios**. **Kotak's Nifty Alpha 50 ETF will track the performance of 50 stocks listed with NSE with high Alpha in the last one year**. As per the criteria, these companies are selected from top 300 companies by average free-float market capitalization and average daily turnover for the last six months.

Sambit Patra appointed as Chairman of ITDC

- BJP national spokesperson **Sambit Patra** has been appointed as the **Chairman of India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC)**.
- The **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)** has approved the **Tourism Ministry's proposal to split the post of chairman and managing director of ITDC**.

The **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)** decides appointments to several top posts under the **Government of India**. The committee is composed of the **Prime Minister of India (who is the Chairman)** and the **Minister of Home Affairs**. Originally the Minister-in-charge of the concerned Ministry was also part of the committee but as of 14 July 2016, is not.

World's First Sustainable Blockchain Ecosystem 5ire announces the launch of 5ire Capital

- **5ireChain**, the world's first sustainable blockchain, announced it has **raised \$1.5 million in its second round of private sale**. Per the spokesperson at 5irechain, Launchpool Web3 Accelerator, Alphabit Fund & Magnus Capital led the funding round with participation from X21 Ventures, Coach K, Brotherhood Capital, and prolific high profile angel investors.
- **5ireChain**, which is **focused on solving the environmental concerns of blockchain at the core**, launches **5ire Capital - a VC arm of 5ire to promote the overall growth of the 5ire ecosystem** and invest in environmentally sustainable projects with their mission of having a prosperous planet for all.

HUL chairman Sanjiv Mehta to take over as FICCI president

- **Sanjiv Mehta**, Chairman and Managing Director of **Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL)** will be appointed as **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) President**. Currently, **Sanjiv Mehta is also the President of Unilever South Asia** and is a member of the 'Unilever Leadership Executive' which is Unilever's Global Executive Board. He will be succeeding **Uday Shankar**, the current President of FICCI.

The **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI)** is a non-governmental trade association and advocacy group based in India. Established in 1927, on the advice of Mahatma Gandhi by Indian businessman **Mr. G.D. Birla and Purshottamdas Thakurdas**. It is the **largest, oldest and the apex business organisation in India**. It is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation. FICCI draws its membership from the corporate sector, both private and public, including SMEs and MNCs. It is **involved in sector-specific business building, business promotion and networking**. It is headquartered in the national capital **New Delhi**.

Two ITC properties become first hotels in the world to achieve net-zero carbon status

- Two of ITC's signature hotels in South India have been bestowed with a rare distinction. The hospitality group's flagship **ITC Grand Chola in Chennai**, and **ITC Windsor in Bengaluru**, have been certified with the **US Green Building Council (USGBC)'s LEED Zero Carbon Certification**.
- The recognition makes both hotels the only ones in the world to **have a net-zero carbon status**, while the **600-room ITC Grand Chola — the group's largest property — becomes the largest commercial building on the planet to be accorded the distinction**. The acronym **LEED** stands for 'Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design'.

- Simply put, the certification implies that both hotels leave no carbon footprint on the environment on account of their eco-friendly operations and sustainable practices. The ITC Grand Chola for instance has risen to prominence for powering its electric boilers through a wind farm while using the steam emitted from the boilers in laundry services.

MG Motors first carmaker in India to launch NFT

- MG Motor India announced its foray into the non-fungible token (NFT), making it the first carmaker in the country to launch a collection of NFTs. The carmaker said that its NFTs will be categorised into 4 “C” segments – Collectables, Community & diversity, Collaborative art, and CaaP (Car-as-a-Platform).

A non-fungible token (NFT) is a unit of data stored on a digital ledger, called a blockchain, that certifies a digital asset to be unique and therefore not interchangeable. NFTs can be used to represent items such as photos, videos, audio, and other types of digital files. Access to any copy of the original file, however, is not restricted to the buyer of the NFT. While copies of these digital items are available for anyone to obtain, NFTs are tracked on blockchains to provide the owner with a proof of ownership that is separate from copyright.

Paytm introduces Paytm Wealth Academy for traders and investors

- The leading digital payment solution provider, Paytm has launched its first AI-powered educational platform called Paytm Wealth Academy. The company has launched the service on its trading app – Paytm Money. The Paytm Wealth Academy allows users to learn trading and financial concepts at their own pace at their level of comfort.
- The platform offers a wide catalog of courses and webinars along with personalized recommendations for users, curated to complement their existing knowledge. Paytm Wealth Academy is an educational platform designed to make financial learning intuitive and self-driven. The platform will also enable new traders to establish a ground-up understanding of financial concepts and also encourage experienced traders to stay updated with advanced trading strategies.

Home First Finance enters into strategic co-lending partnership with Union Bank of India

- Home First Finance Company India announced that it has entered into a strategic co-lending partnership with Union Bank of India for providing home loans to customers at competitive interest rates.
- The partnership aims at leveraging the strengths of both entities to provide a seamless experience to retail home loan customers in the priority sector. The tie will also enable HomeFirst to expand its product offerings to customers in the geographies it operates, while continuing to leverage its technology led customer-first approach.

Apple is about to become the world's first \$3 trillion company

- Apple is on the verge of yet another major milestone. The iPhone maker is close to topping a market value of more than \$3 trillion — the first publicly traded company ever to be worth that much. Apple's market value first crossed the \$1 trillion threshold in August 2018 and passed \$2 trillion in August 2020.

Apple Inc. is an American multinational technology company that specializes in consumer electronics, computer software and online services. Apple is the largest information technology company by revenue (totaling \$274.5 billion in 2020) and, since January 2021, the world's most valuable company. As of 2021, Apple is the fourth-largest PC vendor by unit sales and fourth-largest smartphone manufacturer. It is one of the Big Five American information technology companies, alongside Amazon, Alphabet (Google), Meta (Facebook), and Microsoft. Apple was founded in 1976 by Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak and Ronald Wayne to develop and sell Wozniak's Apple I personal computer. It was incorporated by Jobs and Wozniak as Apple Computer, Inc. It is headquartered in Silicon Valley, California.

Oil India plans first hydrogen plant in Assam

- State-run Oil India Ltd has become the latest entity to join the green hydrogen rush by initiating the process of setting up a 100 kw green hydrogen plant at its pumping station No. 3 in Jorhat district of Assam.

- Though a small pilot as compared to more ambitious projects planned by its oil sector siblings, **OIL's proposed plant is significant as it will deploy AEM technology for the first time in the country and will be first such project in the northeast.**
- **Electrolysers based on AEM technology provide a compact and affordable solution for producing high-quality hydrogen for running backups etc.** These electrolysers are compact and can be stacked for higher capacity needed for running pumping stations, petrol pumps or blending with natural gas to make the fuel cleaner.

Oil India Limited (OIL) is the second largest government owned hydrocarbon exploration and production corporation. It is under the ownership of Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, with its operational headquarters in Duliajan, Assam. The government corporation is a Navratna with its offices in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, Guwahati and Jodhpur.

Vodafone sells world's first SMS 'Merry Christmas' for 107,000 euros

- **Vodafone announced that it is auctioning the world's first SMS as a non-fungible token (NFT).** Now, the company has announced that a bidder has paid 107,000 euros for the replica of the first communication protocol of a short message, perpetuated as a NFT.
- The proceeds from the auction will go to a good cause this Christmas season. **Vodafone will donate them to UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, to support the 82.4 million people who have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict and persecution.**

Vodafone Group Plc is a British multinational telecommunications company. Its registered office and global headquarters are in Newbury, Berkshire, England. The name Vodafone comes from *VOICE DATA FONE* (the latter a sensational spelling of "phone"), chosen by the company to "reflect the provision of voice and data services over mobile phones".

LIC unveils digital zone in Mumbai

- **The Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India has set up 'LIC Digi Zone' at BKC in Mumbai to enhance its digital operations** such as sales and services for its customers. Aiming to become a tech-driven life insurer, it said it will offer information regarding its products and services through kiosks installed in the premises. **Customers can use this facility to buy policies online, pay premium and avail other services as well.**

JSW Group becomes first Indian corporate house to introduce EV policy

- **Mumbai-based JSW Group has become the first major Indian multinational conglomerate to roll out an electric vehicle (EV) policy for its employees.** Under the new scheme, **employees will be able to avail an incentive of up to Rs 3 lakh towards purchasing a four-wheeler or two-wheeler EV.** The Green Initiative JSW Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy will be rolled out nationwide for all JSW employees from January 1, 2022.
- **The policy is aimed at increasing the pace of EV adoption across sectors** and creating the necessary supplementary framework to slowly decarbonise the transportation sector, which is the third leading sector in terms of carbon emissions in India. **The policy is also "aligned with India's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and Sustainable Development Scenarios (SDS) of The International Energy Agency (IEA)".**

JSW Group is an Indian multinational conglomerate, based in Mumbai. It is led by Sajjan Jindal and part of the O.P. Jindal Group. The group is active in sectors such as steel, energy, minerals, ports & infrastructure, and cement, across India, the US, South America, and Africa. **JSW Steel, JSW Energy, JSW Ispat Steel, and JSW Cement are among the subsidiaries of JSW Group.**

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



First of its kind program for lateral entry for women researchers in joint R&D projects between India and Germany launched

- A first-of-its-kind programme to promote women in the field of research and development through lateral entry was launched. The programme called Women's Involvement in Science and Engineering Research (WISER) program was launched by Indo-German Science & Technology Centre (IGSTC) for encouraging women researchers in joint R&D projects.
- This program by IGSTC, a joint initiative of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), Government of Germany, will support women scientists holding regular/long term research positions in academia or research institutes/industry.
- The involvement in the program will be possible through lateral entry. There is neither requirement of break-in-career nor any age limit, and it will enable easy participation. Mr. SK Varshney, Indian co-chair and Head, International Cooperation Division, DST, pointed out that WISER will enable gender equality and women's participation in Science and Technology through IGSTC's program. IGSTC is going to support the awardees with a maximum amounting to Rs. 39 L from the Indian side & € 48000 from the German side. WISER program offers 20 awards per year.

Startup displays India's first privately developed, 3D-printed cryogenic engine

- Hyderabad-based startup Skyroot Aerospace has successfully demonstrated the country's first privately developed cryogenic rocket engine named Dhawan-1 after eminent rocket scientist Satish Dhawan.
- The engine has been completely 3D printed and made in India. The company used a superalloy for 3D printing the engine, which reduced the manufacturing time by 95%.

Russia Carries Out another Successful Test of Zircon Hypersonic Missile

- Russia had carried out another successful test of its Zircon hypersonic cruise missile, as world powers race to develop the advanced weaponry.
- Russia, the United States, France and China have all been experimenting with so-called hypersonic glide vehicles – defined as reaching speeds of at least Mach 5. The missile has undergone a number of recent tests, with Russia planning to equip both warships and submarines with the Zircon.
- As part of “the completion of tests” of Russia's hypersonic missile weapons, the Admiral Gorshkov warship launched a Zircon missile at a target in the Barents Sea at a range of 400 kilometres (about 250 miles). The missile has undergone a number of recent tests, with Russia planning to equip both warships and submarines with the Zircon.
- Putin revealed the development of the new weapon in a state of the nation address in February 2019, saying it could hit targets at sea and on land with a range of 1,000 kilometres (about 620 miles) and a speed of Mach 9.
- Russia's latest Zircon test came after Western reports that a Chinese hypersonic glider test flight in July culminated in the mid-flight firing of a missile at more than five times the speed of sound over the South China Sea.

Russia or the Russian Federation is a transcontinental country spanning Eastern Europe and Northern Asia. It is the **largest country in the world**; covering over 17,125,191 square kilometres (6,612,073 sq mi), **consisting of more than one-eighth of the Earth's inhabited land area**, extending to **eleven time zones**, and has bordering sixteen sovereign nations. **Vladimir Putin is serving as the current President of Russia** since 2012, previously being in the office from 1999 until 2008. **He was also Prime Minister from 1999 to 2000** and again from 2008 to 2012. **Russian ruble or rouble is the currency of the Russian Federation**. **Mikhail Mishustin is serving as Prime Minister of Russia** since 16 January 2020.

MoS IT launches India's first indigenous server Rudra

- **Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar launched the first indigenous server, Rudra, developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) under the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM).**
- **The server design can be used for manufacturing classical standalone commercial servers and also as building blocks for building large supercomputing systems of tens of petaflops of computing performance.**
- **A wide spectrum of sectors, including high-performance computing (HPC) systems, hyperscale data centres, edge computing, banking & commerce, manufacturing, oil & gas industry and healthcare, can benefit from the indigenously-built server.**

NASA launches first-of-a-kind mission to kick an asteroid off course

- **The DART (Double Asteroid Redirection Test) is a real proof-of-concept experiment, should humanity ever need to stop a giant space rock from wiping out life on Earth. The goal is to slightly alter the trajectory of Dimorphos, a "moonlet" around 525 feet (160 meters, or two Statues of Liberty) wide that circles a much larger asteroid called Didymos (2,500 feet in diameter). The pair orbit the Sun together.**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is an independent agency of the executive branch of the **United States federal government responsible for the civilian space program**, as well as aeronautics and aerospace research. **President Dwight D. Eisenhower established NASA in 1958**. **Sen. Bill Nelson was sworn in as the 14th NASA administrator** on May 3, 2021, **tasked with carrying out the Biden-Harris administration's vision for the agency.**

India successfully tests extended range version of multi barrel rocket launcher system, Pinaka-ER

- **The Pinaka-ER Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher System was successfully tested at Pokhran range. Successful tests of Pinaka Extended Range (Pinaka-ER), Area Denial Munitions (ADM) and indigenously developed fuzes have been carried out at various test ranges.**
- **The system is jointly designed by laboratories of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) - Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE), Pune and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL), Pune.**
- **The Industry Partner has manufactured enhanced Pinaka Mk-1 rockets with DRDO's hand holding during the production and Quality Assurance. The Pinaka - ER is the upgraded version of the earlier version of Pinaka which has been in service with the Indian Army for the last decade. The system has been designed in the light of emerging requirements with advanced technologies enhancing the range.**
- **The DRDO, along with the Army, conducted series of performance evaluation trials of these industry-produced rockets at Field Firing Ranges during the last three days. In these trials, enhanced range Pinaka rockets were test fired at different ranges with various warhead capabilities. All the trial objectives were met satisfactorily.**
- **A number of 24 rockets were fired for different ranges and warhead capabilities to meet the objectives of accuracy and consistency. With this, the initial phase of technology absorption of Pinaka-ER by the Industry Partner has successfully been completed making the Industry Partner ready for series production of the rocket system.**

- The ARDE, Pune has developed different fuzes for Pinaka rocket for different types of applications. After design validation trials, dynamic performance evaluation of these fuzes have been evaluated with flight testing.

Pinaka is a multiple rocket launcher produced in India and developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for the Indian Army. The system has a maximum range of 40 km for Mark-I and 60 km for Mark-I enhanced version.

First privately developed, 3D-printed cryogenic engine

- Hyderabad-based startup Skyroot Aerospace has successfully demonstrated the country's first privately developed cryogenic rocket engine named Dhawan-1 after eminent rocket scientist Satish Dhawan.
- The company will use the engine as the upper stage of its Vikram-2 launch vehicle. Skyroot, one of the few startups that have come to prominence since India opened up its space sector last year, has a series of three Vikram rockets that can carry payloads up to 720 kg to the low earth orbit.
- The engine has been completely 3D printed and made in India. The company used a superalloy for 3D printing the engine, which reduced the manufacturing time by 95%.

India, Russia sign pact to deepen space cooperation

- India and Russia vowed to deepen collaboration in the space sector, including in the human spaceflight programme, and signed an agreement for cooperation in the building as well as operation of launch vehicles. The pact was signed during the India-Russia summit held between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin
- India and Russia reaffirmed their commitment for increasing sourcing of Russian crude oil on long-term contracts through preferential pricing, strengthening LNG imports to India, and the possible utilisation of the Northern Sea Route for energy supplies.
- A joint statement issued after the summit said the two countries welcomed the enhanced cooperation between the Russian State Space Corporation 'Roscosmos' and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) including in the human spaceflight programmes and satellite navigation.

New 'Made-In-India' Missile Successfully Tested

- To Strengthen Navy India successfully flight tested the indigenously developed new Vertical Launch Short Range Surface-to-Air Missile (VLSRSAM) from the coast off Balasore, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) official.
- The quick reaction surface-to-air-missile missile developed by DRDO was test launched from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur at about 3.08 pm from a vertical launcher against an electronic target at a very low altitude. The missile has an operational range of 50 to 60 km and features mid course inertial guidance through fiber optic gyroscope and active radar homing in terminal phase.

India International Science Festival 2021 in Panaji, Goa

- Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways and Ayush Shri Sarbananda Sonowal attended the India International Science Festival (IISF) 2021 in Panaji, Goa. IISF is an annual event considered to be the biggest platform in the country which brings together students, the public, researchers, innovators and artists from around the globe.
- IISF 2021 is being organised jointly by the MoES, Department of Science and Technology, Department of Biotechnology, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, in collaboration with Vijnana Bharati.

NASA launches first-of-a-kind mission to kick an asteroid off course

- American space agency Nasa launched a mission to deliberately smash a spacecraft into an asteroid from California. "Asteroid Dimorphos: we're coming for you!" Nasa tweeted after the launch. This may sound like science fiction, but the DART (Double Asteroid Redirection Test) is a real proof-of-concept experiment, should humanity ever need to stop a giant space rock from wiping out life on Earth. The DART lifted off aboard a SpaceX rocket from Vandenberg Space Force Base.

- **The goal is to slightly alter the trajectory of Dimorphos, a “moonlet”** around 525 feet (160 meters, or two Statues of Liberty) wide that circles a much larger asteroid called Didymos (2,500 feet in diameter). The pair orbit the Sun together.
- **It will be the same time when the binary asteroid system will be 6.8 million miles (11 million kilometers) from Earth, the nearest they ever get.** To be clear, the asteroids in question pose no threat to our planet. **But they belong to a class of bodies known as Near-Earth Objects (NEOs), which approach within 30 million miles.**
- **NASA’s Planetary Defense Coordination Office is most interested in those larger than 460 feet in size,** which have the potential to level entire cities or regions with many times the energy of average nuclear bombs. **There are 10,000 known near-Earth asteroids 460 feet in size or greater,** but none has a significant chance to hit in the next 100 years. One major caveat: scientists think there are still 15,000 more such objects waiting to be discovered.

The **Double Asteroid Redirection Test (DART)** is a NASA space mission aimed at testing a method of planetary defense against near-Earth objects (NEOs). In September 2022, a space probe is set to deliberately crash into the minor-planet moon Dimorphos of the double asteroid Didymos to assess the future potential of a spacecraft impact to deflect an asteroid on a collision course with Earth through a transference of momentum. DART is a joint project between NASA and the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory (APL). It is being administered by NASA’s Planetary Defense Coordination Office, and several NASA laboratories and offices are providing technical support. **International partners, such as the space agencies of European Space Agency (ESA), Italian Space Agency (ASI), and JAXA Japan, are contributing to related or subsequent projects.**

India successfully test fires long-range Supersonic Missile Assisted Torpedo (SMART)

- **India successfully tested a long-range Supersonic Missile Assisted Torpedo (SMART) system developed by Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO).** The missile aimed at enhancing the country’s anti-submarine warfare capability was launched from Balasore in Odisha.
- The missile is launched from a ground mobile launcher and it can cover a range of distances **“This canister-based missile system consists of advanced technologies like two-stage solid propulsion, electro-mechanical actuators and precision inertial navigation.”**

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is an agency of the Republic of India, charged with the military’s research and development, headquartered in New Delhi, India. It was formed in 1958 by the merger of the Technical Development Establishment and the Directorate of Technical Development and Production with the Defence Science Organisation. **Dr G. Satheesh Reddy is the current Chairman of DRDO.**

Gaganyaan to be launched in 2023, India’s first space station by 2030

- Clearing the air on the launch year of India’s much-delayed maiden human spaceflight mission to space, Union space minister Jitendra Singh said the **final crewed Gaganyaan mission will be launched in 2023.**
- He also said the **Venus mission is planned for launch in 2023, L-1 Aditya solar and Chandrayaan-3 missions due for launch in 2022-23** and the country’s first space station is likely to come up by 2030.
- Gaganyaan’s major missions, like the **test vehicle flight for the validation of crew escape system performance and first uncrewed mission of Gaganyaan (G1),** are scheduled during the beginning of second half of 2022.
- **This will be followed by the second uncrewed mission at the end of 2022 carrying ‘Vyommitra’, a spacefaring human robot developed by Isro, and finally the first crewed Gaganyaan mission in 2023,** “which would, undoubtedly, place India in the elite club of nations (America, China and Soviet Union now Russia)”.

Gaganyaan (“Sky Craft”) is an Indian crewed orbital spacecraft intended to be the formative spacecraft of the Indian Human Spaceflight Programme. The spacecraft is being designed to carry three people, and a planned upgraded version will be equipped with rendezvous and docking capability. In its maiden crewed mission, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)’s largely autonomous 5.3 t (12,000 lb) capsule will orbit the Earth at 400 km (250 mi) altitude for up to seven days with a two or three-person crew on board. The first

crewed mission was originally planned to be launched on ISRO's GSLV Mk III in December 2021, but this has since been delayed to no earlier than 2023. This Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) manufactured crew module had its first un-crewed experimental flight on 18 December 2014. Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) will provide support for critical human-centric systems and technologies like space grade food, crew healthcare, radiation measurement and protection, parachutes for the safe recovery of the crew module and fire suppression system.

IIT Guwahati establishes advanced facilities at first-of-its kind nanotechnology centre in Northeast

- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati has established advanced micro electronics and nano energy facilities at its Centre for Nanotechnology which is the first-of-its-kind in the Northeast.
- The centre, aimed at meeting future challenges and augmenting academic partnerships with industry in nanotechnology, will carry out multidisciplinary translational research in the fields of health care, nano biomaterials, micro and nano electronics, nano-energy devices and sensors.
- "This centre has established state-of-the-art facilities for nanofabrication, with class 100 cleanroom facilities being one of the major attraction, and is poised to make major contributions in the areas of nanodevices development for healthcare, renewable energy-photovoltaics, light-emitting diodes, thin-film transistors, sensors, and other allied areas.

NASA spacecraft 'touches' the Sun

- A spacecraft launched by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) has achieved a feat once thought impossible. For the first time in history, a spacecraft has touched the corona of the Sun – an extreme environment that's roughly 2 million degrees Fahrenheit – in a milestone that marks one major step for the spacefaring organisation and one giant leap for mankind and solar science.
- The rocketship, called the Parker Solar Probe, successfully entered and flew through the Sun's upper atmosphere – the corona – on April 28 and sampled particles and magnetic fields situated on the surface of the red-hot star.
- The \$1.6 billion mission also aims to improve forecasts of major space weather events that impact life on Earth, as well as astronauts in space, NASA said. Space weather can change the orbits of satellites, shorten their lifetimes or interfere with onboard electronics.
- As it circles closer to the solar surface, Parker Solar Probe is making new discoveries that other spacecraft were too far away to see, including from within the solar wind – the flow of particles from the sun that can influence us here on Earth.
- Parker Solar Probe will keep drawing ever closer to the sun and diving deeper into the corona until its grand finale orbit in 2025. The mission was named after Eugene Newman Parker, a physicist who proposed a number of concepts about how stars give off energy.

Aditya-L1 is the India's first spacecraft to study solar atmosphere developed by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and various other Indian research institutes. In celestial mechanics, the Lagrange points (also Lagrangian points, L-points, or libration points) are points near two large orbiting bodies. Normally, the two objects exert an unbalanced gravitational force at a point, altering the orbit of whatever is at that point. At the Lagrange points, the gravitational forces of the two large bodies and the centrifugal force balance each other. Aditya-L1 will be able to provide observations of Sun's photosphere, chromosphere and corona. In addition, an instrument will study the solar energetic particles' flux reaching the L1 orbit, while a magnetometer payload will measure the variation in magnetic field strength at the halo orbit around L1.

India successfully test fires new generation nuclear capable ballistic missile 'Agni P' off Odisha

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully tested the new generation nuclear-capable ballistic missile 'Agni P' from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.

- Agni P is a two-stage canisterised solid-propellant ballistic missile with dual redundant navigation and guidance system. **Agni-P is a new generation advanced variant of Agni class of missiles. It is a two-stage canisterised missile with range capability between 1,000 and 2,000 km.**
- **The ballistic missile weighs 50 per cent less than Agni 3 and can be launched from rail and road and stored for a longer period and transported all across the country as per operational requirements. On December 7, the country successfully test-fired the air version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile that the ministry of defence described as a ‘major milestone’ in BrahMos development.**
- The ministry had said the missile was **successfully test-fired from Indian Air Force’s (IAF) Sukhoi 30 MKI supersonic fighter aircraft from the Integrated Test Range (ITR), based in Chandipur, off the coast of Odisha. Around the same time, the Vertically Launched Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VL-SRSAM) was successfully test-fired from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur.**

6G technology

- **While 5G is still at its nascent stage, 6G will build on top of 5G. It is touted to drive the adoption of 5G use cases at scale through optimisations and cost-reduction, especially at the enterprise level. At the same time, it will enable new use cases. Moreover, 6G will bring together the human, physical, and virtual environments.**
- **Take the concept of ‘Metaverse’, for example. It is one of the 5G use cases, which promises to disrupt both traditional and digital spaces. With 6G, the ‘Metaverse’ would not just evolve into a final model but is also likely to unify with the physical world with the help of artificial intelligence and machine learning.**
- **This is because the most notable aspect of 6G would be its ability to sense the environment, people and objects – according to telecom gear maker Nokia Bell Labs. The network’s sensing ability combined with artificial intelligence and machine learning will make the network more cognitive.**

The government of India has asked the Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) to begin developing 6G and other futuristic technologies to catch up with the global market in time. The next generation telecom technology (6G) is said to be 50 times faster than 5G and is expected to be commercially launched between 2028-2030. 6G (sixth-generation wireless) is the successor to 5G cellular technology. It will be able to use higher frequencies than 5G networks and provide substantially higher capacity and much lower latency (delay). One of the goals of 6G internet will be to support one microsecond-latency communication (delay of one-microsecond in communication). This is 1,000 times faster - or 1/1000th the latency - than one millisecond throughput.

World’s most powerful space telescope launched on quest to behold 1st stars

- **The world’s most powerful space telescope blasted off into orbit, headed to an outpost 1.5 million kilometres (930,000 miles) from Earth, after several delays caused by technical hitches. The James Webb Space Telescope, some three decades and billions of dollars in the making, left Earth enclosed in its Ariane 5 rocket from Kourou Space Centre in French Guiana.**
- **The \$10 billion observatory hurtled toward its destination 1 million miles (1.6 million kilometers) away, or more than four times beyond the moon. It will take a month to get there and another five months before its infrared eyes are ready to start scanning the cosmos.**
- **The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) considered a successor of the Hubble Telescope and will extend and complement its discoveries. Launched into low Earth orbit in 1990, the Hubble Space Telescope has made more than 1.4 million observations, including tracking interstellar objects, capturing a comet colliding with Jupiter, and discovering moons around Pluto. Hubble has captured galaxies merging, probed supermassive black holes and has helped us understand the history of our universe.**
- **The JWST will observe primarily in the infrared range and provide coverage from 0.6 to 28 microns. The instruments on Hubble see mainly in the ultraviolet and visible part of the spectrum. It could observe only a small range in the infrared from 0.8 to 2.5 microns. Goals of JWST: 1. To search for the first galaxies that formed after the Big Bang. 2. To determine how galaxies evolved from their earlier formation until now. 3. To observe the formation of stars from the first stages to the formation of planetary systems. 4. To measure the physical and chemical properties of planetary systems and investigate the potential for life in such systems.**

The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) is a space telescope developed by NASA with the European Space Agency (ESA), and the Canadian Space Agency (CSA). The telescope is named after James E. Webb, who was the administrator of NASA from 1961 to 1968 and played an integral role in the Apollo program. It is intended to succeed the Hubble Space Telescope as NASA's flagship mission in astrophysics. JWST was launched on 25 December 2021 on Ariane flight VA256. It is designed to provide improved infrared resolution and sensitivity over Hubble, and will enable a broad range of investigations across the fields of astronomy and cosmology, including observations of some of the most distant events and objects in the Universe such as the formation of the first galaxies, and allowing detailed atmospheric characterization of potentially habitable exoplanets.

INS Khukri, first of the India Built Missile Corvettes, Decommissioned After 32 Years

- **INS Khukri, the first of the indigenously built missile corvettes, was decommissioned “after 32 years of glorious service”.** The corvette was built by the Mazagaon Dock Shipbuilders on August 23, 1989 and had the distinction of being part of both the Western and Eastern Fleets. **The ship was commissioned in Mumbai by Shri Krishna Chandra Pant, the then Raksha Mantri and Mrs Sudha Mulla, wife of late Capt Mahendra Nath Mulla.** Commander (now Retired Vice Admiral) Sanjeev Bhasin was the first Commanding Officer.

China is Home to World's First Small Modular Nuclear Reactor

- **China Huaneng Group Co.'s 200-megawatt unit 1 reactor at Shidao Bay is now feeding power to the grid in Shandong province.** A second reactor is undergoing tests before being connected and putting the plant into full commercial operations in the middle of next year.
- **The plant is the world's first pebble-bed modular high-temperature gas-cooled reactor, heating up helium instead of water to produce power. It's a so-called fourth generation reactor, designed to shut down passively if something goes wrong** – in contrast to active systems that may not be able to trigger safety measures if power fails, which is what happened at the Fukushima Daiichi accident in Japan a decade ago.

UN General Assembly grants Observer Status to International Solar Alliance

- **UN General Assembly has granted Observer Status to International Solar Alliance.** He said, in the last six years, **International Solar Alliance has become an example of positive global climate action through partnerships to benefit global energy growth and development.**

The International Solar Alliance is a common platform for cooperation among sun-rich countries lying fully or partially between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. The initiative was launched at the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris at the end of 2015 by the then, President of France and the Prime Minister of India. In January 2016, Narendra Modi, and the then, French President François Hollande jointly laid the foundation stone of the International Solar Alliance headquarters and inaugurated the interim Secretariat at the National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) in Gwalpahari, Gurugram, India. Ajay Mathuri is the current Director General of ISA.

India successfully tests 'Pralay' missile off Odisha coast

- **India successfully test fired short-range, surface to surface-guided ballistic missile 'Pralay' off the Odisha coast.** The solid-fuel, battlefield missile developed by Defence Research Development Organisation is based on Prithvi Defence Vehicle from the Indian ballistic missile programme. 'Pralay' is a 350-500 km short-range, surface-to-surface missile with a payload capacity of 500-1,000 kg.

Rajnath lays foundation stone for two DRDO centres in Lucknow

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh laid the **foundation stone for a Defence Technology & Test Centre (DTTC) and a BrahMos manufacturing centre to be established by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in Lucknow.**
- **“A first-of-its-kind Defence Technologies & Test Centre (DTTC), over approximately 22 acres is being set up to accelerate the growth of the defence and aerospace manufacturing clusters in Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor (UP DIC),”.** It will consist of six sub-centres — **Deep-Tech Innovation & Startup Incubation Centre,**

Design & Simulation Centre, Testing & Evaluation Centre, Centre for Industry 4.0/Digital Manufacturing, Skill Development Centre and Business Development Centre.

DRDO successfully conducts flight test of indigenously developed High-speed Expendable Aerial Target - Abhyas

- DRDO has successfully conducted the flight test of Indigenously developed High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) 'Abhyas' from Integrated Test Range at Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.
- Two boosters provided initial acceleration during launch and a small turbojet engine was used to sustain high subsonic speed with long endurance. The indigenous data link designed by Bengaluru based Industry partner has been successfully flown and tested during the flight.

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is an agency of the Republic of India, charged with the military's research and development, headquartered in New Delhi, India. It was formed in 1958 by the merger of the Technical Development Establishment and the Directorate of Technical Development and Production with the Defence Science Organisation. Dr G. Satheesh Reddy is the current Chairman of DRDO.

KUFOS chosen as partner in NASA-ISRO research programme

- The Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (KUFOS) has been chosen to join a research project backed by the Space Application Centre of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) under a NASA-ISRO collaborative programme.
- NASA and ISRO are jointly developing a space-borne synthetic aperture radar (NISAR), to be launched in January 2023. NISAR will produce high resolution data for large areas with the capability for systematic observation of earth resources. It will provide time-series data for eco-systems applications benefiting several operational activities related to agriculture, forestry, wetlands, and soil moisture estimation.

India's first rural 5G trial begins at Gujarat's Ajol

- India's first 5G technology trials for rural broadband began at Ajol village, with a base transceiver station (BTS) installed 17 km away at Unava town in Gandhinagar district.
- A team including representatives of the department of telecom (DoT) and two private mobile service providers visited Ajol village to measure speeds. Officials recorded a 105.47 Mbps download speed and a 58.77 Mbps upload speed.
- Another area that is being tested is 5G immersive gaming and artificial intelligence assisted 360 degree cameras with real-time video streams. Another potential use of 5G technology that the DoT plans to test is where end users can get a 360 degree experience, where the user can also identify objects and people in a given environment.

5G or fifth generation is the latest upgrade in the long-term evolution (LTE) mobile broadband networks. 5G is the next generation of mobile broadband that will eventually replace, or at least augment 4G LTE connection. Operate in the millimeter wave spectrum (30-300 GHz) which have the advantage of sending large amounts of data at very high speeds. Operate in 3 bands, namely low, mid and high frequency spectrum. Reduced latency will support new applications that leverage the power of 5G, the Internet of Things (IoT), and artificial intelligence. Increased capacity on 5G networks can minimize the impact of load spikes, like those that take place during sporting events and news events.

Japan launches huge Inmarsat-6 F1 communications satellite into orbit

- The Inmarsat-6 F1 satellite launched atop a Mitsubishi Heavy Industries H-2A rocket from Japan's Tanegashima Space Center. The 12,060-pound (5,470 kilograms) Inmarsat-6 F1 is the first of two "I-6" spacecraft that London-based company Inmarsat plans to loft to geostationary orbit, about 22,240 miles (35,790 kilometers) above our planet.
- Designated H-IIAF45, Inmarsat-6 F1 launch is Japan's third orbital flight of 2021 and H-IIA's second mission of the year, marking the 45th flight of the H-IIA vehicle overall. It is dual-payload satellite featuring

both L-band (ELERA) and Ka-band (Global Xpress). It is the world's largest and most sophisticated commercial communications satellite ever launched. H-IIA is Japan's longest-serving liquid-fueled rocket (since 2001) and currently largest rocket operated by MHI for the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA).

NASA's Most Anticipated Space Projects set to launch in 2022

- Some of NASA's most anticipated space projects are set to launch in 2022. Expect the first photographs and science results from the recently launched James Webb Space Telescope in 2021, as well as the launch of a new mission to examine an undiscovered world and the planned collision of a NASA spacecraft with an asteroid's moon.
- More spectacular photographs from NASA's Juno mission, which has been orbiting Jupiter since 2016, are on their way. The spacecraft is now observing several of Jupiter's 79 moons as part of its extended mission. In September, it will pass close by Europa, one of the planet's most fascinating moons. Scientists are fascinated by Europa because it has a vast ocean beneath its ice cover that could support life. Occasionally, plumes of ice explode into space from holes in the ice. Juno might be able to see the plumes in action.

NASA launches world's most powerful space telescope to scour universe for hints of life

- World's largest and most powerful space telescope has been launched successfully into orbit to make breakthrough discoveries on the origins of the Universe and Earth-like planets beyond our solar system. The James Webb Space Telescope, NASA's premier space observatory of the next decade, launched in an Ariane rocket from the European Space Agency's base in French Guiana.
- The Webb telescope will reach its destination in solar orbit some 1.5 million km from Earth - about four times farther away than the moon. And Webb's special orbital path will keep it in constant alignment with the Earth as the planet and telescope circle the sun in tandem.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is an independent agency of the executive branch of the United States federal government responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and aerospace research. President Dwight D. Eisenhower established NASA in 1958. Sen. Bill Nelson was sworn in as the 14th NASA administrator on May 3, 2021, tasked with carrying out the Biden-Harris administration's vision for the agency.

Inventions/Discoveries/Health

India's first 2 Omicron cases reported in Karnataka, One is Foreigner

- Two COVID-19 cases of the Omicron variant have been detected in India, making it the 30th country in the world to report the coronavirus strain that has triggered global alarm. Both the cases have been reported in Karnataka with the patients being two men aged 66 and 46.
- First discovered in southern Africa, Omicron represents a fresh challenge to global efforts to battle the pandemic with several nations already re-imposing restrictions many had hoped were a thing of the past. It is the latest coronavirus strain to emerge since the start of the pandemic, including the currently dominant Delta variant, which was first detected in India in October 2020.
- The B.1.1.529 variant was first reported to WHO from South Africa on 24 November 2021. The epidemiological situation in South Africa has been characterized by three distinct peaks in reported cases, the latest of which was predominantly the Delta variant. In recent weeks, infections have increased steeply, coinciding with the detection of B.1.1.529 variant. The first known confirmed B.1.1.529 infection was from a specimen collected on 9 November 2021.

Coronaviruses are a group of related RNA viruses that cause diseases in mammals and birds. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a contagious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The first known case was identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. The disease has since spread worldwide, leading to an ongoing pandemic. Symptoms of COVID-19 are variable, but often include fever, cough, headache, fatigue, breathing difficulties, and loss of smell and taste. Symptoms may begin one to fourteen days after exposure to the virus. At least a third of people who are infected do not develop noticeable symptoms.

Scientists who created world's first 'living' robots, now say they can reproduce

- After creating the world's first living robots, United States-based scientists have discovered that they can now reproduce in a way different from any plant or animal.
- Xenobots are sized less than a millimetre, created from the stem cells of the African clawed frog – scientifically known as *Xenopus laevis* – from where it derives the name. The scientists believe that the new discovery could serve fruitful in the medical field. "These are very small, biodegradable and biocompatible machines, and they're perfectly happy in freshwater," he said, adding that near-term applications could include collecting microplastics from waterways.

China develops AI 'prosecutor' that can press charges with '97% accuracy'

- China has been making rapid advancements in the technology field. And now, Chinese scientists have claimed that they have developed a machine that can charge people with crime using artificial intelligence. This is the world's first such machine.
- The AI "prosecutor" can charge people with over 97 per cent accuracy, the researchers further claimed, adding that it works on verbal description. The machine was built and tested by the Shanghai Pudong People's Procuratorate, the country's largest and busiest district prosecution office.
- The machine received training for five years – from 2015 to 2020 – reported South China Morning Post. It was fed 17,000 cases and was able to identify and press charges for common crimes. Project's lead scientist told local media that the machine has been created to reduce the current workload of prosecutors. Digital technology is being used extensively by law enforcement agencies around the world, but are limited to evaluation of evidence or in forensics. This is the first time that AI is being pushed in the decision-making process.

China is a country in East Asia and the world's most populous country, with a population of around 1.404 billion. Beijing is the capital of the People's Republic of China. Xi Jinping is serving as president of the People's Republic of China. National People's Congress is the national legislature of the People's Republic of China. With 2,980 members in 2018, it is the largest parliamentary body in the world. China's currency yuan joins the International Monetary Fund's basket of reserve currencies. China claims sovereignty over all of the

South China Sea, a huge source of hydrocarbons. However, several ASEAN member countries, including Vietnam, Philippines and Brunei, have made counterclaims. Chinese claims in the South China Sea are described in part by the nine-dash line. China and India are the two neighbouring countries in Asia. India shares 3488 km of border with China that runs along the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh. The Belt and Road Initiative, known in Chinese and formerly in English as One Belt One Road or OBOR for short, is a global infrastructure development strategy adopted by the Chinese government in 2013 to invest in nearly 70 countries and international organizations.

In a first, India's fertility rate falls below replacement level

- The latest findings of the NFHS survey have revealed that India's national Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has fallen below the replacement level for the first time. The latest set of findings of the NFHS 2019-21 survey released by the Union Health Ministry revealed that the average number of children born to a woman over her lifetime has dropped below the replacement level for the first time.
- The national Total Fertility Rate was found to be 2.2 in the NFHS 2015-16 survey, down from 2.7 in the NFHS 2005-06 survey. The same has now declined to 2.1 in rural areas and 1.6 in urban areas, as per the latest NFHS survey.

The total fertility rate (TFR) of a population is the average number of children that would be born to a woman over her lifetime if: 1. she was to experience the exact current age-specific fertility rates (ASFRs) through her lifetime. 2. She was to live from birth until the end of her reproductive life. It is obtained by summing the single-year age-specific rates at a given time.

New 'super-Jupiter' breaks the mold on where planets can exist

- One of the largest planets ever detected orbits at an enormous distance around two stars with a combined mass up to 10 times greater than our sun, an extreme celestial family that shatters assumptions about the type of places where planets can exist.
- The planet, located about 325 light years from Earth, is a gas giant apparently similar in composition to Jupiter but about 11 times more massive. It belongs to a planetary class called "super-Jupiters" exceeding the mass of our solar system's largest planet. It orbits a pair of stars gravitationally bound to one another, called a binary system.
- It has what might be the widest orbit of any known planet – about 100 times wider than Jupiter's orbit around our sun and about 560 times wider than Earth's. Until now, no planet had been found orbiting a star more than three times the sun's mass. Stars larger than that emit so much radiation that they were thought to torch the planetary formation process.

IISER Bhopal unveils turmeric genome for the first time in the world

- A team of IISER Bhopal researchers, led by Dr Vineet K Sharma, Associate Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, have sequenced the genome of the turmeric plant for the first time in the world. With increasing interest in herbal medicines all over the world, researchers are focusing on the poorly understood areas of herbs such as their genetic backgrounds.
- The developments in DNA and RNA sequencing technologies have spurred on a new discipline called 'herbal genomics' that are targeted to understanding the genetic composition of herbs and their relationship to the medicinal traits. Given the nascency of the field of herbal genomics and the complexity of herbal systems, only a few well assembled herbal genomes have been studied so far.

IIT Guwahati team develops efficient perovskite solar cells to produce electricity from sunlight

- Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati have developed hybrid perovskite solar or photovoltaic devices to produce electricity from sunlight, which are highly efficient, cost effective, easy to manufacture and easily recyclable.
- These devices were developed achieving power conversion efficiencies beyond 21 per cent by utilising economical solution-based photovoltaic device processing techniques at mild room temperature and realising high ambient, thermal and optical stability, they said.

- A Perovskite Solar Cell (PSC) is a type of solar cell which includes a perovskite-structured compound, most commonly a hybrid organic-inorganic lead or tin halide-based material, as the light-harvesting active layer.

IIT-D develops test to detect Omicron in 90 min

- Researchers at IIT Delhi’s Kusuma School of Biological Sciences have developed an RT-PCR based assay for the specific detection of the Omicron (B.1.1.529.1) variant of SARS-CoV-2. The assay is based on detecting specific mutations, which are present in the Omicron variant and absent in other currently circulating variants of SARS-CoV-2.
- Primer sets targeting these unique mutations in the S gene were designed for the specific amplification of either the Omicron variant or other currently circulating variants of SARS-CoV-2 and tested using real time PCR. Using synthetic DNA fragments, the assays were optimised to distinguish the wild-type from the Omicron variant in a dynamic range from 107 to less than 100 copies per reaction.
- Currently, the identification or screening for Omicron is done world-wide using next-generation sequencing based methods, which require over 3 days. By using this RT-PCR based assay, it will be possible to test for the presence of the Omicron variant within 90 minutes.

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a contagious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The first case was identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. It has since spread worldwide, leading to an ongoing pandemic. WHO first learned of this new virus on 31 December 2019, following a report of a cluster of cases of ‘viral pneumonia’ in Wuhan, People’s Republic of China. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are, Fever, Dry cough and Fatigue. The standard diagnosis method is by real-time reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) from a nasopharyngeal swab. In India, the first case was reported in Kerala.

New study gives evidence for dark-matter free galaxies

- A few years ago, when Pavel Mancera Piña—a PhD scholar at the University of Groningen—along with his colleagues discovered galaxies with little to no dark matter, they were told: “measure again, you’ll see that there will be dark matter around your galaxy.” Dark matter is a form of matter that makes up about 27 per cent of the universe’s mass.
- The team used a sophisticated radio telescope called Very Large Array in New Mexico for their study and spent days re-analysing their observations. Their results recently published in the *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society* which confirms that there is no trace of dark matter in the galaxy AGC 114905, located about 250 million light-years away.
- The researchers show that there is no trace of dark matter in the galaxy AGC 114905, located about 250 million light-years away. The researchers list two possible explanations for this lack of dark matter. One is that the AGC 114905 galaxy could have lost or been stripped of its dark matter by nearby larger galaxies.

IIT Madras researchers develop motion planning algorithms that can think like humans

- Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras have developed a class of fast and efficient “motion planning” algorithms which can think like human beings and enable autonomous aerial, ground or surface vehicles to navigate obstacle-cluttered environments.
- According to the team, the algorithms have been developed on a novel notion of ‘Generalised Shape Expansion’ (GSE) that enables planning for a safe and dynamically feasible trajectory for autonomous vehicles. These approaches have been found to yield superior results compared to many of the existing seminal and state-of-the-art motion planning algorithms.

One year on this exoplanet is just 16 hours long

- Astronomers have found a giant, hot exoplanet that orbits around its star once every 16 hours. Named TOI-2109b, the planet is being pulled towards its star, and “in one or two years, if we are lucky, we may be able to detect how the planet moves closer to its star,” says Dr Ian Wong, lead author of the discovery in a release.

- “In our lifetime we will not see the planet fall into its star. But give it another 10 million years and this planet might not be there.” **TOI-2109b is about five times the mass of Jupiter and is located about 855 light-years away from Earth. The researchers estimated that the exoplanet is spiraling into its star at a rate of 10 to 750 milliseconds per year.**

An exoplanet or extrasolar planet is a planet outside the Solar System. The first possible evidence of an exoplanet was noted in 1917, but was not recognized as such. The first confirmation of detection occurred in 1992. This was followed by the confirmation of a different planet, originally detected in 1988. As of 1 December 2021, there are **4,878 confirmed exoplanets in 3,604 planetary systems, with 807 systems having more than one planet.**

Hot little planet as dense as iron zips around red dwarf star

- **Scientists have spotted one of the smallest planets ever discovered outside our solar system, a scorching-hot world a bit larger than Mars and just about as dense as pure iron zooming around its home star every eight hours.**
- The researchers said they managed to detect the planet, **located a relatively close 31 light years from Earth, and discern some of its important traits**, illustrating the improvements in recent years in the ability to characterize smaller-sized planets beyond our solar system.
- Scientists are eager to find exoplanets, as these alien worlds are known, that might harbor life. **The newly discovered one, called GJ 367b, certainly could not, possessing ferocious surface temperatures and perhaps a molten lava surface on the side facing its star.**

IISc researchers find that Hydrogen sulphide gas suppresses HIV infection

- **The researchers at the Indian Institute of Science have found out that hydrogen sulphide gas can suppress the Human Immunodeficiency Virus or HIV virus.**
- **A team from the Department of Microbiology and Cell Biology and the Center for Infectious Disease Research in IISc have ascertained that increased hydrogen sulphide in the body reduces the rate at which the HIV virus multiplies in the immune cells. The finding will pave the way for developing a more comprehensive therapy against HIV.**

Tamil Nadu becomes first state to get own genome sequencing lab

- **Tamil Nadu became the first state to get its own genome sequencing laboratory. Tamil Nadu Health Minister Ma Subramanian said that the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) has approved the state government’s request to set up a genomic sequencing lab.**
- **The Tamil Nadu health department has been raising concerns about the delay in receiving the results of the gene drop samples sent for genomic analysis amid the surge in Covid-19 cases. So far, the state has sent samples to INSACOG-recognised centres in Instem Bangalore, CDFD Hyderabad, and NIV Pune.**

INSACOG (Indian SARS-CoV-2 Consortium on Genomics or Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genetics Consortium is the forum set up under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare by the Government of India on 25 December 2020, to study and monitor genome sequencing and virus variation of circulating strains of COVID-19 in India. Initially it was tasked to study the virus variant Lineage B.1.1.7 earlier found in United Kingdom in December 2020. INSACOG works as a consortium of 28 national laboratories for genome sequencing located in different parts of India. All these 10 laboratories are required to share 5% of positive samples to INSACOG for further research and studies. A National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) nodal unit maintain a database of all samples of the new variants. Two national genomic sequencing database centers are appointed 1) National Institute of Biomedical Genomics and 2) CSIR Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology. In its early research INSACOG identified virus variant Lineage B.1.617 referred to as a double mutation variant.

Ambala to get north India’s first National Centre for Disease Control branch

- **A branch of the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) is set to come up in Ambala’s Naggal village. The centre, which is expected to come up at a cost of 14 crore, will be spread across 4.11 acre and be the first of its kind in North India. It will have a state-of-the-art lab, equipped with modern equipment.**

The National Centre for Disease Control (previously known as the National Institute of Communicable Diseases) is an institute under the Indian Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. It was established in July 1963 for research in epidemiology and control of communicable diseases and to reorganize the activities of the Malaria Institute of India. It has eight branches at Alwar, Bengaluru, Trivandrum, Calicut, Coonoor, Jagdalpur, Patna, Rajahmundry and Varanasi to advise the respective state governments on public health. The headquarters are in Sham Nath Marg, in New Delhi.

Fresh revelations in anatomy: New layer of muscle discovered on the jaw

- Researchers from Switzerland have discovered a new layer of muscle on our jaw. The team described an additional, deeper layer in the masseter muscle, a prominent jaw muscle which is found in the rear part of the cheek and helps in chewing.
- Their findings were published recently in the journal *Annals of Anatomy*. They recommend that the muscle be named *Musculus masseter pars coronidea*, which means the coronoid part of the masseter. The team carried out a detailed anatomical study using computer tomographic scans. They analysed stained tissue sections from deceased individuals and MRI data from a living person.
- It has now been proven that the human jaw muscle has three layers instead of the two previously on record. The most visible and the largest jaw muscle is the masseter muscle. If you put your hand at the point where the lower end of your ears and the cheeks meet and press down on your teeth, you can easily feel that muscle tightening. This masseter muscle has one deep part and another superficial part, as described in anatomy books (check main image). The researchers wanted to figure out if the masseter muscle had a super-deep layer which was hidden as suggested by historical texts.

Astronomers detect first signature of Magnetic Field on a Planet Outside of Our Solar System

- Researchers have identified the first signature of a magnetic field surrounding a planet outside of our solar system. Earth's magnetic field acts as a shield against energetic particles from the sun known as the solar wind. Magnetic fields could play similar roles on other planets.
- An international team of astronomers used data from the Hubble Space Telescope to discover the signature of a magnetic field in a planet outside our solar system. The finding, described in a paper in the journal *Nature Astronomy*, marks the first time such a feature has been seen on an exoplanet.
- A magnetic field best explains the observations of an extended region of charged carbon particles that surround the planet and stream away from it in a long tail. Magnetic fields play a crucial role in protecting planetary atmospheres, so the ability to detect the magnetic fields of exoplanets is a significant step toward better understanding what these alien worlds may look like.
- The team used Hubble to observe the exoplanet HAT-P-11b, a Neptune-sized planet 123 light-years from Earth, pass directly across the face of its host star six times in what is known as a "transit." The observations were made in the ultraviolet light spectrum, which is just beyond what the human eye can see.
- Hubble detected carbon ions – charged particles that interact with magnetic fields – surrounding the planet in what is known as a magnetosphere. A magnetosphere is a region around a celestial object (such as Earth) that is formed by the object's interaction with the solar wind emitted by its host star.

The Hubble Space Telescope (often referred to as HST or Hubble) is a space telescope that was launched into low Earth orbit in 1990 and remains in operation. It was not the first space telescope, but it is one of the largest and most versatile, renowned both as a vital research tool and as a public relations boon for astronomy. The Hubble telescope is named after astronomer Edwin Hubble.

ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Asia's first mulberry fossil unearthed in Rajasthan's lignite mines

- Scientists have unearthed Asia's first fossil record of mulberry from the Gurha lignite mines near Bikaner in western Rajasthan, a finding that they say, indicates the existence of a warm, humid climate in north-western India 56 million years ago.
- Although mulberry (*Morus* genus) is now widely grown in India and Asia, no fossils of the tree have yet been found in the continent, say a team of scientists from HBN Garhwal University in Uttarakhand, University of Calcutta, and Sidho Kanho Birsa University in Purulia in West Bengal.

Indian woman researcher discovers over 50 species of frogs

- Sonali Garg has won a prestigious postdoctoral fellowship on biodiversity to Harvard University. From tiny frogs that can sit on a thumbnail to a mysterious species of a frog that appears for less than a week for breeding activities and lives a secretive lifestyle for the rest of the year, Sonali Garg, a researcher at Delhi University, has described 50 new species of frogs from India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia.
- Not only is Dr. Garg India's first woman researcher to discover 50 new frog species, she was awarded the prestigious Edward O. Wilson Biodiversity Postdoctoral Fellowship to work at Harvard University.

India's first pure play climate tech fund may kick off by March end

- Entrepreneur Harsha Moily and venture capital veteran Balaji Srinivasan are set to kick off what they claim will be India's first climate technology-focused fund as the country joins global efforts to deal with the climate challenge. Nature-Fix Climate (NFC) Ventures, their Bengaluru-based fund, aims to close the first round of \$80-\$100 million by March 2022 and the rest by December, taking the overall fund size to \$200 million. The fund is backed mostly by US-based investors. In the last six years, International Solar Alliance has become an example of positive global climate action through partnerships to benefit global energy growth and development.

Askot wildlife sanctuary declared eco-sensitive zone

- Established to protect the endangered flagship species Musk Deer and its habitat, the picturesque Askot Wildlife Sanctuary in Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh has been finally declared as an Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ).
- In the sanctuary there are 2600 plants, 250 birds and 37 mammal species like snow leopard, Himalayan black bear, Himalayan tahr, blue sheep, serow besides musk deer. Among the fauna are species like loong, monal, kalij pheasant and cheer pheasant.

World's first Science-Sanskrit film to depict 'Mangalyaan' saga

- A science documentary in the classical language, considered to be the first such initiative in the world cinema, will soon enthrall movie buffs with the success story of India's historic 'Mars Orbiter Mission' (MOM) alias 'Mangalyaan'.
- Titled "Yaanam", the proposed 45-minute movie is based on "My Odyssey: Memoirs of the Man Behind the Mangalyaan Mission" penned by former ISRO chief K Radhakrishnan.

Delhi to Publish First 'State Of Environment' Report Next Year

- Delhi will publish its first 'State of Environment Report' next year that will have data on all key areas, including sewage, water quality, waste collection and segregation etc., put together succinctly. The city government is also likely to give funds to municipal corporations for the first time for the management of road dust and potholes and to prevent open waste burning.
- The Environment Department will also give some of the funds received from the Centre under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) to MCDs for the management of road dust and potholes, and to prevent open waste burning.

SPORTS



Sports Personalities in News

Paramjeet Kumar becomes first Indian para powerlifter to win medal at World Championships

- **Paramjeet Kumar** became the first powerlifter from India to clinch a medal in the World Para Powerlifting Championships.
- Competing in the men's up to 49 kg category, **Paramjeet Kumar** of Punjab clinched bronze in the ongoing Championships in Tbilisi, Georgia. Parmjeet's medal-winning lift was 158 kg.

Shreyas Iyer becomes first Indian to score century and half-century on Test debut

- **Shreyas Iyer** became the first Indian to score a century and a half-century on Test debut. With 170 runs in the match, Iyer became the third-highest run-scorer for India on debut. **Shikhar Dhawan (187)** against Australia in Mohali in 2012 is still the highest scorer for India while **Rohit Sharma (177)** stands second.

Indian tennis player Ramkumar Ramanathan wins maiden singles title on ATP Challenger Tour

- **Indian tennis player Ramkumar Ramanathan** won his maiden Challenger level singles title after 12 years turning a Pro. He outplayed Evgeny Karlovskiy in the summit clash of the ATP 80 Manama event, in Manama, Bahrain.

Argentina's Lionel Messi claims Ballon d'Or for seventh time

- Popular Argentine striker **Lionel Messi** won the 2021 Ballon d'Or, adding the seventh golden ball to his account. The 34-year-old who is also the star player of Paris St-Germain football club, has won Ballon d'Or in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2015, 2019 and 2021. Bayern Munich's Robert Lewandowski ranked second and Chelsea's Jorginho stood third as runners up to the Ballon d'Or.

Athlete Anju Bobby George wins World Athletics Women of year award

- The former international long jump star **Anju Bobby George** has been awarded the Woman of the Year Award by World Athletics (WA) for grooming talent in the country and advocating gender equality.
- 44-year-old only Indian known for winning a medal in the World Championships with a long jump bronze in the 2003 edition was named for the award in the world body's annual awards. Senior Vice President of the Indian Athletics Federation, Bobby George is also a constant voice for gender equality and mentors schoolgirls for future leadership positions within the sport producing a world U20 medallist.

Viktor Axelsen, Tai Tzu Ying named BWF Male and Female Player of the Year

- Olympic champion **Viktor Axelsen** and Tokyo Games silver medallist **Tai Tzu Ying** were named the BWF Male and Female Player of the Year respectively in recognition of their stellar runs this season.
- It was the first season-ending award in this category for both Axelsen and Tai Tzu Ying — the All England champions of 2020. All eight winners were honoured in a virtual broadcast. Axelsen was rewarded for his extraordinary run starting from the Barcelona Spain Masters. The Dane made 10 finals in 11 individual tournaments, winning seven of those, including gold at the Tokyo Games.

India's Ananya Bansal wins Silver at Asia Youth Paralympic Games in Bahrain

- **India's Ananya Bansal won the country's first silver medal in shotput** in the F-20 category at the Asia Youth Paralympic Games in Manama, Bahrain.
- **Ananya Bansal is an athlete with an intellectual impairment. Deepa Malik, the President of the Paralympic Committee of India lauded Ananya** for her performance in the showpiece event.

PV Sindhu settles for silver in BWF World Tour Finals

- **Indian shuttler PV Sindhu settled for a silver medal after going down meekly to South Korea's An Seyoung 16-21 12-21 in the summit clash of the BWF World Tour Finals.** The reigning world champion Indian ace had no answer to the in-form world number six Korean, who dictated terms from the word go.

New Zealand's Ajaz Patel creates history becomes third bowler in Test cricket to claim all 10 wickets in an innings

- **In the 2nd Test between India and New Zealand, left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel created history by taking all 10 wickets in an innings and became the third bowler after Jim Laker and Anil Kumble to achieve the feat.** He dismissed all 10 Indian batsmen in the first innings at the Wankhede Stadium. Patel finished with figures of 10/119 as India were bowled out for 325.

Lewis Hamilton wins thrilling Saudi Arabian Grand Prix

- **Lewis Hamilton beat Max Verstappen in a chaotic and controversial Saudi Arabian Grand Prix to set up a winner-takes-all title finale** in Abu Dhabi next weekend.
- **Hamilton won despite crashing into the back of Verstappen** at one point during a race in which the Dutchman twice had to cede a position to the Mercedes driver that he had gained illegally.

Virat Kohli scripts history, becomes first player in international cricket to complete 50 wins in each format

- A true modern-day great, **Virat Kohli led the Indian cricket team to another stupendous performance in the longest format of the game, winning the 2-match Test series 1-0 against New Zealand.**
- The occasion put Kohli in another illustrious list of records in international cricket as the **India skipper became the first cricketer ever to register 50 wins or more in each of the three formats of the game.**

ITF World Tour Championships: Pranjala beats Sowjanya to clinch women's singles title

- **Pranjala Yadlapalli clinched the KSLTA ITF World Tour Championships women's singles title** beating Sowjanya Bavisetti, in Bengaluru.
- Yadlapalli, who played two back-to-back three-setters in her quarterfinal and semifinal matches and suffering cramps, dreaded yet **another three-setter in the title clash against statemate Sowjanya.**

Sabari J becomes the first World Boxing Council India welterweight champion

- **Chennai's Sabari J became the inaugural winner of the World Boxing Council's (WBC) India welterweight title,** defeating the more experienced Akashdeep Singh of Chandigarh in an eight-round bout.
- In the WBC Asia silver lightweight title bout, **Karthik Satish Kumar defeated Hero Tito of Indonesia in a hard-fought eight-round encounter.**

Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships: Sanket Mahadev Sargar wins gold medal in Men's 55 kg snatch category

- **Sanket Mahadev Sargar won the gold medal in the Men's 55 kg snatch category** at the ongoing Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships 2021 in Tashkent.
- For the top-podium finish, the **Indian lifted the weight of 113 kg.** With this lift, Sargar also created the new snatch national record. **The Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships 2021 is currently being held**

concurrently in Tashkent along with World Weightlifting Championships 2021 from December 7 to 17. India, being a Commonwealth nation is competing in both.

India's Jeremy Lalrinnunga wins Gold at Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships in Tashkent

- India's teenage weightlifting sensation Jeremy Lalrinnunga won the gold medal in the men's 67 kg category at the Commonwealth Championships, in Tashkent.
- The 2018 Youth Olympics gold medallist has lifted the total weight of 305 kg with 141 kg in Snatch and 164 kg in Clean and Jerk. His personal best total is 306 kg with 140 kg in Snatch and 166 kg in Clean and Jerk which came in 2019.

Magnus Carlsen claims fifth successive world chess crown

- Norway's Magnus Carlsen claimed his fifth world chess crown in Dubai with a crushing 7.5-3.5 victory against Ian Nepomniachtchi, who faded badly after going toe-to-toe with the Norwegian defending champion in the early games.
- Carlsen retained his status as undisputed king of world chess. It is his fifth successive world title (starting in Chennai in November 2013). Besides, he is world No. 1 in all formats including rapid and blitz. Anand had won five official World titles but only three were in Matchplay, considered as the ultimate test.
- Viswanathan Anand is an Indian chess grandmaster and the fifteenth undisputed world chess champion. He became the first grandmaster from India in 1988, and is one of the few players to have surpassed an Elo rating of 2800, a feat he first achieved in 2006.

Simone Biles named Time's 2021 Athlete of the Year

- Simone Biles was named Time's 2021 Athlete of the Year. The world's most decorated gymnast was hailed for putting her mental health first when she withdrew from four event finals at the Tokyo Olympics.
- Biles, a four-time Olympic medalist, later revealed that she suffered from what gymnasts called "the twisties – when you lose the sense of space and dimension in the air. Despite the setback, the 24-year-old managed to earn a team all-around silver and a bronze in balance beam at the Tokyo Games.

F1 Abu Dhabi GP: Verstappen wins maiden F1 title

- Red Bull's Max Verstappen seals his maiden F1 title by beating title rival Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes in a last-lap thriller. The Red Bull team expected Hamilton to give back the position but race director Michael Masi, along with the stewards, decided against investigating the incident and applying any penalty.

Ajay Singh wins 3rd gold for India in Commonwealth Weightlifting C'ships, qualifies for 2022 CWG

- Ajay Singh clinched India's third gold of the Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships by winning the men's 81 kg category. Singh lifted a total of 322 kg and also set a national record in snatch (147 kg).

SJFI to honour Sunil Gavaskar with medal

- The Sports Journalists' Federation of India (SJFI) decided to confer the prestigious 'SJFI Medal' to legendary cricketer Sunil Gavaskar. The body took the decision at its Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Guwahati.
- Neeraj Chopra, who won India's lone gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics, was adjudged the SJFI Sportsman of the Year while weightlifter Mirabai Chanu, who won a silver at the quadrennial extravaganza, was voted as the Sportswoman of the Year.

Seven-time Formula One Champion Lewis Hamilton Receives Knighthood

- Britain's seven-times Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton received a knighthood for services to motorsport, days after losing out on what would have been a record eighth title in the last lap of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.

- Hamilton is the fourth Formula One driver to receive the honorary title of “Sir” in Britain after the Australian Jack Brabham, Stirling Moss and Jackie Stewart, and the only one to have received the award while still racing.

Kidambi Srikanth bags historic silver in BWF World Championships in Spain

- In Badminton, Kidambi Srikanth bagged a historic silver medal after losing to Loh Kean Yew of Singapore 15-21, 20-22 in the Men’s singles final of BWF World Championships at Huelva in Spain.
- Srikanth is the first Indian to finish runners-up. Lakshya finished with the bronze medal. This is the first time that India got two medals in the men’s singles in the same edition of the Badminton World championships. Before this, India got two bronze medals in the Men’s singles at the Badminton world championships with Prakash Padukone in 1983 and B Sai Praneeth in 2019.

Rishabh Pant appointed as Uttarakhand’s brand ambassador

- Swashbuckling India wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant has been appointed the brand ambassador of Uttarakhand with an aim to promote sports and create mental health awareness among the state’s youth.
- In February 2021, Pant was named the Men’s Player of the Month in the first edition of the ICC Player of the Month Awards.

PV Sindhu appointed BWF’s Athletes’ Commission member

- India’s two-time Olympic medallist shuttler PV Sindhu was appointed as a member of the Badminton World Federation’s (BWF) Athletes’ Commission. The former world champion was named alongside five others who will serve as members till 2025.
- The Chair and Deputy Chair will be decided among the six members. “The new Commission will meet soon and decide the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Commission amongst the six members.

Pankaj Advani wins his 11th National Billiards title

- Ace cueist Pankaj Advani defended his national billiards title his 11th in the tournament after he defeated his PSPB teammate Dhruv Sitwala.

Jhulan Goswami first Woman Cricketer to launch rare NFT Cricket Memorabilia

- Jhulan Goswami sets to storm the exciting new world of non-fungible token (NFT) with the Dubai based CricFlix, in association with RevSportz and Fanatic Sports, launching its first-ever cricket non-fungible token (NFT) auction in Dubai.
- Sports NFTs have proven to be game-changing digital assets in recent times and the launch of CricFlix’s rare NFTs will offer fans unique ownership rights alongside opportunities to make revenue by accumulating treasured moments from their digital sporting collection.

FIS Alpine Skiing Competition: Ace Indian skier Aanchal Thakur wins Bronze medal in Montenegro

- Ace Indian skier Aanchal Thakur has bagged Bronze medal at the FIS Alpine Skiing Competition in Montenegro. She finished 3rd with an overall timing of 1:54:30.
- Georgia Epiphaniou, who won Silver medal was just 2 seconds ahead of Aanchal. With this, Aanchal has become the first Indian Ski athlete to win two medals at international level. She has previously won a bronze medal in the 2018 FIS Alpine 3200 Cup held in Turkey.

Mohammad Shami becomes fifth Indian pacer to take 200 Test wickets

- Mohammed Shami has established himself among the greats of Indian cricket by becoming only the fifth Indian pacer to take 200 Test wickets. Shami achieved the feat in the first India-South Africa Test match in Centurion.
- Shami has joined Kapil Dev, Javagal Srinath, Zaheer Khan, and Ishant Sharma in the elusive list. Shami reached the milestone in 55 Test matches and is the third quickest Indian after Kapil and Srinath to join the list.

Shami took a five-wicket haul at the SuperSport Park to reach 200 Test wickets. Shami's exceptional bowling effort helped India bowl South Africa out for a score of 197 in the first innings.

Arif Khan becomes first Indian to qualify for two events in Winter Olympics

- **Jammu and Kashmir-based alpine skier Arif Mohammed Khan has qualified for his second event at the 2022 Winter Olympics to be held in Beijing.** By doing this, he becomes the first Indian to qualify for two events at the Winter Olympics. There are three Indians who have previously competed at the Winter Olympics in 2 events.

Loh Kean Yew became Singapore's first badminton world champion

- **Loh Kean Yew became Singapore's first badminton world champion with a 21-15 22-20 win over India's Kidambi Srikanth in Huelva, Spain.** Only players from China, Indonesia, Denmark and Japan had won the men's title since the inaugural competition in 1977.

Smriti Mandhana nominated for prestigious Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy for ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year-2021 award

- **India women's team cricketer Smriti Mandhana was nominated for the prestigious Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy for ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year-2021 award.** With 855 runs in 22 internationals, at an average of 38.86 with one century and five half-centuries, the year gone by has seen the 25-year-old Mandhana touch new heights. Besides Mandhana, the other three cricketers – England's Tammy Beaumont, Australia's Lizelle Lee and Ireland's Gaby Lewis also figure in the list.



Sport Events

‘Neeraj’ to be mascot for first Kerala Olympic Games

- A rabbit mascot named Neeraj, in honour of Neeraj Chopra, the first Indian athlete to win an Olympic gold medal, will be the symbol for the first ever ‘Kerala Olympic Games’, slated to be held in February 2022.
- “The meet will be conducted on 24 disciplines which includes athletics, aquatics, archery, basketball, boxing, badminton, cycling, football, wrestling, hockey, judo, karate, kambadi (Kabadi), KHO- KHO, netball, rugby, rifles (shooting), wushu, tennis, table tennis, Taekwondo, volleyball and weight lifting,” the KOA said in a release. Ahead of the Games, district games will be held in all 14 districts and athletes and teams selected from this level will participate in the Kerala Olympics Games, KOA said.

India’s Hansini Mathan Rajan beats Tokyo Olympics’ youngest athlete, Hend Zaza to win ITTF title

- India’s Hansini Mathan Rajan defeated Syria’s Hend Zaza, the youngest athlete of this year’s Tokyo Olympics, to win the girls singles event at the 2021 ITTF Hopes and Challenge table tennis tournament in Amman.
- The Chennai-based Hansini had also secured her second ITTF World Youth Series title with a win the U-13 girls category in Muscat in October. She had won her maiden Youth Series title in Tunisia.

Sports Minister Anurag Thakur launches first edition of Khelo India Women’s U-21 Hockey League in New Delhi

- Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Thakur launched first edition of Khelo India Women’s Hockey League U-21 at Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium in New Delhi. A total of 14 teams across different States will participate in the league from 15th to 21st of this month.

Junior Men’s Hockey World Cup: Argentina thumps Germany for first title in 16 years

- Argentina showcased its organised game with great composure to beat six-time champion German side 4-2 and win the title after 16 years in the men’s hockey Junior World Cup at the Kalinga Stadium.
- An error-prone India lost to a better-prepared France 3-1 to finish fourth for a second time. It was the 2016 champion’s second loss to France in this edition.

India to host first-ever world yogasana championship in June

- India is set to host the first-ever yogasana world championship in June next year. The National Yogasana Sports Federation (recognised by the Sports Ministry) is working towards building a strong culture of fitness, competition, well-being, and growth through practice and development of yogasana. The opening ceremony of India’s first Physical National Yogasana Sports Championships in Bhubaneswar.

Jamshedpur FC creates history, becomes first Indian club to join Global Football Alliance

- In a major boost to the Jharkhand soccer fraternity, Jamshedpur FC became the first Indian football club to receive a membership of Global Football Alliance (GFA).
- The Tata Steel-owned club became the 20th member to be accepted in the association, with the achievement being regarded as a milestone in Indian Football.

India to host Women’s U-18, U-19 SAFF Championships

- India will host Women’s Under-18 and Under-19 SAFF championships next year. While SAFF Under-18 Women’s Championship will be held from March 3 to 14, the SAFF Under-19 Championship will take place from July 25 to August 3. This was announced by All India Football Federation.
- Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and hosts India will compete in the SAFF U-18 Women’s Championship. The five teams will face each other once in a round-robin format before the top two sides square off in the final.

- The SAFF U-19 Championship will be a six-team affair. Bhutan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka will be the other teams apart from hosts India. The six teams will be divided into two groups of three each. The group stage will be played in a round-robin format with each team facing each other once.

Bangladesh lifts U-19 SAFF Championship trophy beating India by solitary goal

- Bangladesh has lifted SAFF U-19 Women's Championship defeating India by a solitary goal in Dhaka.

U.P. clinches National junior hockey crown

- Uttar Pradesh rode on Arun Sahani's brace to script a 3-1 win over Chandigarh in the final of the 11th Hockey India junior National men's championship.
- It was a complete domination by Uttar Pradesh, which was clinical in all departments. Nipping the Chandigarh attack in the bud and attacking from both flanks, Uttar Pradesh, with three World Cuppers in its team, proved why it is the best side of the tournament. World Cupper Uttam Singh was the fulcrum of the team. He was not only the midfield general but also worked hard on both flanks.

Hockey: India wins bronze, Korea lift the Asian Champions trophy in Dhaka

- In a scintillating match, Korea defeated Japan to lift the trophy in the Hero Asian Champions trophy hockey in Dhaka. The five-nation tournament came to an end with two matches being played on the last day of the game. India defeated Pakistan 4-3 to secure the bronze medal while Korea defeated Japan 4-2 to emerge Asian Champions.

Himachal Pradesh beat Tamil Nadu to clinch Vijay Hazare Trophy

- Himachal Pradesh batters played out of their skins to beat Tamil Nadu in the final of Vijay Hazare Trophy at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium.

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AWARDS



Konkani writer Damodar Mauzo conferred with 57th Jnanpith Award

- **Renowned Konkani writer Damodar Mauzo** has been conferred with **57th Jnanpith Award** for the year **2022**. Noted Assamese poet **Nilmani Phookan** has bagged **56th Jnanpith award** for the year **2021**.
- **Mauzo is second Konkani writer to receive the highest literary award**, earlier being given to **Writer Ravindra Kelekar in 2006**. Mauzo is short story writer, novelist and screenplay writer. **His novel Karmelin had bagged Sahitya Akademi award in 1983**. His several short stories are translated into other languages and have appeared in various magazines. Stories of Mauzo depict the struggle of poor people, their agonies and sorrows.
- **Phookan is a Sahitya Akademi and Padma Shri awardee**. Based out of Guwahati, he is a poet of renown and has written *Surya Henu Nami Ahe Ei Nodiyedi*, *Gulapi Jamur Lagna*, and *Kobita*. **Phookan is the third Assamese writer to have received the Jnanpith**. The previous awardees were **Birendra Kumar Bhattacharya in 1979** and **Mamoni Raisom Goswami in 2000**.

Jnanpith Award is the **oldest and the highest Indian literary award presented annually by the Bharatiya Jnanpith to an author for their “outstanding contribution towards literature”**. Instituted in **1961**, the award is bestowed only on **Indian writers writing in Indian languages included in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India and English, with no posthumous conferral**. From 1965 till 1981, the award was given to the authors for their “most outstanding work” and consisted of a citation plaque, a cash prize and a bronze replica of Saraswati, the Hindu goddess of knowledge and wisdom. **The first recipient of the award was the Malayalam writer G. Sankara Kurup who received the award in 1965 for his collection of poems, Odakkuzhal (The Bamboo Flute), published in 1950.**

Dadabhai Naoroji biography wins Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay NIF Book Prize 2021

- **A biography of Dadabhai Naoroji, one of the founders of the Indian National Congress, by Dinyar Patel was named winner of the Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay NIF Book Prize 2021**. “**Naoroji: Pioneer of Indian Nationalism**” was selected from the six shortlisted books that covered a variety of themes and subjects and showcased some of the finest non-fiction writing about India, organisers New India Foundation said.
- The winner was selected by a **jury chaired by political scientist Niraja Gopal Jayal and also comprising entrepreneurs Nandan Nilekani and Manish Sabharwal and historians Srinath Raghavan and Nayanjot Lahiri**.

IFFI 2021: Japanese movie ‘Ring Wandering’ bags Golden Peacock Award

- **Japanese director Masakazu Kaneko’s “Ring Wandering”, about an aspiring manga artist, won the top honour at the closing ceremony of the 52nd edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI),**
- **The film won the coveted Golden Peacock Award, which consists of a cash prize of Rs 40 lakh to be shared equally between Kaneko and producer Takashi Shiotsuki.**

Nizamuddin Basti conservation project gets two UNESCO Awards

- Nine projects from six countries — Bangladesh, China, India, Japan, Malaysia, and Thailand — have been honoured by a jury of heritage experts. The Nizamuddin Area comprises the World Heritage Site of Humayun’s Tomb, the centuries-old settlement of Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti and Sunder Nursery, in addition to the 16th Century Batashewala Tomb-Garden Complex, tomb of 16th Century courtier poet Khan I Khanan ‘Rahim’, and the Mughal-period caravanserai of Azimganj Serai.
- The Urban Renewal project, which started in 2007, has successfully unified these segregated zones of the conservation area into an urban historic district of considerable cultural significance.
- The conservation is being undertaken by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) in partnership with the South Delhi Municipal Corporation, Archaeological Survey of India, Delhi Urban Heritage Foundation, and the Dargah Committee/resident community groups of Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti.
- Since 2000, the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation programme has been recognising the efforts of private individuals and organisations in restoring, conserving, and transforming structures and buildings of distinct heritage value in the region.

Mathematician Nikhil Srivastava, 2 colleagues selected for inaugural Ciprian Foias Prize

- Eminent Indian-American mathematician Nikhil Srivastava, who teaches at the University of California, Berkeley, has been jointly selected for the inaugural Ciprian Foias Prize in Operator Theory by American Mathematical Society (AMS).
- Along with Srivastava, the two other awardees are Adam Marcus and Daniel Spielman. Adam Marcus holds the Chair of Combinatorial Analysis at the Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne (EPFL) in Switzerland. Spielman is Sterling Professor of Computer Science, a professor of statistics and data science, and a professor of mathematics.
- The award recognises their highly original work that introduced and developed methods for understanding the characteristic polynomial of matrices, namely the iterative sparsification method (also in collaboration with Batson) and the method of interlacing polynomials.

Akarsh Shroff of Bengaluru and a student of BITS Pilani was conferred the United Nations V-award

- Akarsh Shroff of Bengaluru and a student of BITS Pilani was conferred the United Nations V-award for his commitment to the welfare of orphans and underserved children. V-Awards is an initiative by the UN Volunteers India which aims to celebrate 10 extraordinary young people under the age of 30 who work to change the lives of communities around them through their acts of volunteerism.
- YuvaSpark, Bengaluru-based NGO co-founded by Akarsh, has impacted more than 82,000 people across eight districts in three States of India through its education and COVID-19 relief programmes.

Jane Goodall conferred Sanctuary award

- Legendary scientist, ethologist, conservationist, and messenger of peace, Jane Goodall has been conferred with the “Legend Award” by Sanctuary Nature Foundation.
- Retired civil servant, ornithologist, mammalogist, artist, and author Anwaruddin Choudhury was conferred with the prestigious “Lifetime Service Award”.
- The Sanctuary Wildlife Awards were instituted in the year 2000 to recognise and draw national attention to the contribution of individuals working for the protection of wildlife and natural habitats in India. Since its inception in 2000, the Sanctuary Wildlife Awards have unearthed and spotlighted the inspirational work of thousands of quiet Earth Heroes across the country.

Hindi writer Wajahat to be awarded 31st Vyas Samman for 2019 play

- The award, instituted in 1991 and given by the KK Birla Foundation, recognises outstanding literary work in Hindi authored by an Indian citizen and published in the previous 10 years. It carries a cash prize of ₹4 lakh.

- **Noted Hindi writer Asgar Wajahat** will be awarded the 31st Vyas Samman for his play **Mahabali**, which was published in 2019. The award, instituted in 1991 and given by the **KK Birla Foundation**, recognises **outstanding literary work in Hindi authored by an Indian citizen and published in the previous 10 years**. It carries a cash prize of ₹4 lakh. The recipient is chosen by a selection panel, which is headed by famous Hindi litterateur Prof. Ramji Tiwari. **Ram Vilas Sharma** is the first recipient of it.

Indian Mathematician receives 2021 DST-ICTP-IMU Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians from Developing Countries

- **Professor Neena Gupta**, a mathematician at the **Indian Statistical Institute in Kolkata**, has been awarded the **2021 DST-ICTP-IMU Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians** from developing countries for her outstanding work in **affine algebraic geometry and commutative algebra**.
- **Professor Gupta** is the **third woman** to receive the **Ramanujan Prize**, which was **first awarded in 2005** and is administered by the **Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP)** jointly with the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** Government of India and the **International Mathematical Union (IMU)**.
- **Ramanujan Prize** is given annually to an eminent Mathematician who is less than 45 years of age on 31 December of the year of the award and has conducted outstanding research in developing countries by **International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), Trieste** and is sponsored by the **Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India**. The **DST-ICTP-IMU Ramanujan Prize committee**, composed of eminent mathematicians from around the world, commented that **Gupta's work "shows impressive algebraic skill and inventiveness"**.

IIT-Kanpur Scientist Ropesh Goyal bags "Young Geospatial Scientist" Award

- **Ropesh Goyal** from **IIT-Kanpur** won the '**Young Geospatial Scientist**' award in recognition of his unique contribution to **developing the Indian Geoid Model and computation software**. Member of Space Commission, Government of India, and former ISRO Chairman **AS Kiran Kumar** presented the award to Goyal during the inaugural event of the **DigiSmart India 2021** conference hosted by the **Geospatial World**.
- The '**Young Geospatial Scientist**' award and a gold medal have been presented every year since 2011 to **promising scientists below 35 years of age in memory of Rachapudi Kamakshi**, a strategic analyst with a strong inclination towards geography and geospatial studies. The **Rachapudi Kamakshi Memorial Trust** is an organisation founded to help and encourage students and young and talented individuals with great ideas and research work in the field of geospatial sciences.

Balkrishna Doshi honoured with the Royal Gold Medal 2022, the world's highest honour for architecture

- **Ahmedabad-based Balkrishna Doshi** will receive the **Royal Gold Medal 2022** by the **Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)**, the world's highest honour for architecture. At 94, Doshi is being recognised for his career spanning seven decades, with over 100 built projects, across India.
- The **Royal Gold Medal** is "**approved personally by Her Majesty The Queen** and is given to a person or group of people who have had a significant influence on the advancement of architecture". The award will be presented to Doshi at a special ceremony in 2022.

IIT Roorkee bags first position among most innovative institutions as selected by CII

- For the second year in a row, **IIT Roorkee** has been selected by the prestigious **Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)** for the **Industrial Innovation Awards**. **IIT Roorkee** bagged the first position under the **Most Innovative Research Institutions** category this year.
- The second and third positions have gone to **IIT Madras** and the **Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services, Hyderabad (INCOIS)**, respectively. Last year, **IIT Roorkee** was adjudged as 'The Most Innovative Institute of the Year' for its innovation quotient.
- **CII Industrial Innovation Awards** were instituted in 2014 to identify and celebrate innovative Indian enterprises across industry segments and sectors. The awards provide an opportunity for enterprises to shine and be known nationally and internationally for their innovative products and services.

- The special category of research institutions under the CII Industrial Innovation Awards 2021 acknowledges all those significant contributions of innovative solutions, which are crucial to practice innovation in a sustained manner and develop effective solutions for the industry, government and society at large.

Singer P Jayachandran honoured with J C Daniel award

- Kerala State Chalachitra Academy honoured singer P Jayachandran with the J C Daniel award for 2020 for his life-long contributions to the Malayalam film industry. He will receive a statuette, a citation, and a cash prize of Rs 5 lakh.

Indian Teen Avani Prashanth to receive Global Child Prodigy Award 2022

- The ‘Global Child Prodigy Award 2022’ will be presented in Dubai in February 2022 by noted personalities. Avani will be among the 100 children to receive the award.
- A 15-year-old student, Avani Prashanth has been selected for the ‘Global Child Prodigy Award 2022’ for excellence in golf. Avani has won the Hero Women’s Professional Golf Tour twice. She recently represented India at the Asia Pacific Women’s Amateur Golf Championship and the Asia Pacific Golf Council in Abu Dhabi, finishing in the top 16. According to the school, she has achieved the best Indian finish at the time of her debut.
- The Global Child Prodigy Awards 2022 will be awarded by celebrities in Dubai in February 2022. The top 100 child prodigies were selected from 48 different categories from thousands of applications received from 68 countries.

Padma Bhushan Anil Prakash Joshi, 2 others win Mother Teresa Memorial Award

- Environmentalist Dr Anil Prakash Joshi, who was conferred upon the Padma Bhushan this year, has been awarded the Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice 2021.
- Vidyut Mohan, the winner of the Earthshot Prize, and Ridhima Pandey, a young environmental activist from Uttarakhand, were also the recipients of the award.
- The Harmony Foundation identifies a theme each year for the Mother Teresa Memorial Awards and felicitates individuals and organisations who work in the realm of augmenting environmental sustainability.
- The awardees were felicitated by Dr Abraham Mathai, the founder chairman of the foundation. While Dr Joshi was given the award for his efforts as a changemaker in environmental sustainability sector by impacting over 10,000 villages in the Himalayan region through his Himalayan Environmental Studies & Conservation Organisation, Vidyut was acknowledged for his seminal and ingenious efforts in combating air pollution through his social enterprise Takachar.

Bhutan confers its highest civilian award on PM Narendra Modi

- PM Narendra Modi conferred with the highest civilian decoration of Bhutan, Ngadag Pel gi Khorlo. Bhutan Prime Minister Lotay Tshering shared on social media that he was overjoyed to hear His Majesty pronounce Prime Minister Modi’s name for the highest civilian decoration of the Kingdom of Bhutan.
- He also wished his countrymen as they celebrate the 114th National Day of Bhutan which commemorates the Coronation of His Majesty the First King of Bhutan, Druk Gyalpo Ugyen Wangchuck on December 17, 1907.
- According to the ministry of external affairs, mutually beneficial economic inter-linkages between India and Bhutan have been an important element in bilateral relations. India continues to be the largest trade and development partner of Bhutan and has extended its assistance to several developmental projects in the country – such as the 1020 MW Tala Hydroelectric Project, Paro Airport, and the Bhutan Broadcasting Station.
- In addition, India is also a leading trade partner of Bhutan, with a free trade regime existing between the two countries. Bhutan was, in fact, the first country to receive the Narendra Modi regime’s gift of Covid-19 vaccines, manufactured by the Serum Institute of India (SII). Earlier this year in January, the country received the first consignment of 1.5 lakh doses of the Covishield vaccine from India as a gift.

Kumar Mangalam Birla receives Global Entrepreneur of the Year Award from TiE

- Aditya Birla Group's chairman, **Kumar Mangalam Birla** received the **Global Entrepreneur of the Year Award- Business Transformation** from **The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE)** based out of Silicon Valley.
- **Birla is the first Indian Industrialist** to receive the award for global entrepreneurship along with top global business leaders **Satya Nadella, Elon Musk, and Jeff Bezos**.
- He was given this award at a ceremony in Dubai for his leadership of the conglomerate during the **Covid-19 pandemic**. The awardees were selected by an independent jury chaired by Tim Draper, venture capital investor and founder of US-based Draper University. Birla said the group stands out for its pace of activity, range of businesses and breadth of its geographical presence.

Indian climate action entrepreneur wins United Nations Women's Award for Leadership Commitment to Gender Equality

- **Divya Hegde** from **Udupi, coastal Karnataka**, has won the **UN Women's Award for Leadership Commitment** at the **2021 Regional Asia-Pacific Women's Empowerment Principles Awards** ceremony. She has been recognised for her sustained efforts in advancing gender equality through climate action efforts.
- Her organisation, **Baeru Environmental Services**, works in the areas of waste management, creation of livelihoods for rural women, and developing a circular economy in the region.

Urvashi Rautela becomes First Indian to be awarded 'Symbol Of The Armour' By Israel's Army

- Actor and model **Urvashi Rautela** recently bagged a prestigious honour from the Israeli army. The **27-year-old** received the **'Symbol of The Armour'** award from the Israeli army **Moshe Levy** and became the first Indian to do so.

Avani Lekhara won 'Best Female Debut' honour at 2021 Paralympic Sport Awards

- Indian shooter **Avani Lekhara**, who has created history by winning India's first Gold medal in Shooting at the **2020 Tokyo Paralympics**, won the **"Best Female Debut"** honour at the **2021 Paralympic Sport Awards**. The Awards were announced by the International Paralympic Committee. She became the **1st Indian woman** to win **2 Paralympic medals** in a single edition of the Paralympic Games. India won an unprecedented **19 medals** at the Paralympic Games including **5 Gold, 8 Silver & 6 Bronze**.

SAIL honoured Golden Peacock Environment Management Award 2021

- **Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL)**, under the Ministry of Steel, has been awarded with the prestigious **Golden Peacock Environment Management Award 2021** for successive three years. The Award is given to organizations for significant achievements in Environment Management by Environment Foundation (WEF) since 1998.

Greenman Viral Desai honoured with Global Environment and Climate Action Citizen Award

- **Surat's noted industrialist Viral Desai**, popularly known as **Greenman** for his love for the environment, has been awarded the prestigious **Global Environment and Climate Action Citizen Award** in Dubai. **Viral Desai and the other winners** were felicitated at Dubai's **Atlantis, The Palm, on December 23**, with the **Bharat Gaurav Samman** by **Sanskriti Yuva Sansthan**. The UAE's Foreign Trade And Economic Development Department's Director-General **Sheikh Awad Mohammed Mugrin** graced the ceremony with his presence.
- **Twenty-eight prominent personalities from 11 countries, including the UK, the US, New Zealand, France, and Malaysia**, were felicitated with the prestigious awards on occasion, but **Viral Desai** was the only one from India to have won the honour for climate action.
- Some of the other awardees include **motivational speaker Padma Shri Gaur Gopaldas, polo player Ashvini Kumar Sharma, Akshaya Patra Foundation's chairman Padma Shri Madhu Pandit Dasa, instrumentalist Padma Bhushan Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, Padma Shri Ramkishore Chhipa, Nirbhaya's mother Asha Devi, investor banker Saket Mishra, and others**.
- **Global Environmental Citizen Award** is an environmental award, established by **"Harvard Medical School Centre for Health and Global Environment"**. It is bestowed annually to an individual who is working to restore and protect global environment.

UNICEF Photo of the Year: Two Indian Photographers Won First & Second Prize

- **UNICEF Germany** has held the international competition **UNICEF Photo of the Year**. It honours photos and photo series by professional photojournalists that document the personalities and circumstances of children in an outstanding way. To take part in the competition, photographers need to be nominated by an internationally renowned photography expert. **An independent jury decided the winner of the ‘UNICEF Photo of the Year’.**
- **As the result of a tropical cyclone, the water in the Ganges Delta burst its banks.** The floods swept away the small tea shop that twelve-year-old Pallavi Paduya and her family ran on Namkhana Island. And with it their entire livelihood. **Indian photographer Supratim Bhattacharjee met the girl in 2020 one day after the disaster, standing in the ruins of her life. He won the first prize.**
- Indian photographer Sourav Das has captured scenes from the everyday life of this unusually creative and lovable village school. According to UNICEF, 1.6 billion children were unable to attend school at the height of the global lockdown. **He won the second prize.**

Sahitya Akademi Award 2021: Authors Namita Gokhale, Khalid Hussain, TMC MLA Bratya Basu among 20 winners

- **Eminent author Namita Gokhale, TMC MLA Bratya Basu and noted Punjabi writer Khalid Hussain were among the 20 names** announced for the **Sahitya Akademi Award 2021.**
- **The annual awards, given in 20 Indian languages,** included seven books of poetry, two novels, five short stories, two plays, one book each of biography, autobiography, criticism and epic poetry.
- **While Gokhale won the award for her 2016 historical epic novel “Things to Leave Behind”, Basu and Hussain won won the awards for a play and collection of short stories “Sullan Da Salan”, respectively.**

The **Sahitya Akademi Award** is a literary honour in India, which the **Sahitya Akademi, India’s National Academy of Letters,** annually confers on writers of the most outstanding books of literary merit published in any of the **24 major Indian languages** such as Tamil, English, Bengali, Punjabi and the **22 listed languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution** recognised by the **Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi.** **Established in 1954,** the award comprises a plaque and a cash prize of **Rs. 1,00,000.** The award’s purpose is to recognise and promote excellence in Indian writing and also acknowledge new trends.

PERSONS IN NEWS

Smriti Irani turns author with ‘Lal Salaam’, novel pays tribute to 76 CRPF personnel martyred in 2010 Dantewada attack

- Bollywood actress-turned-politician, **Smriti Zubin Irani** has turned author with her debut novel ‘Lal Salaam’. The Union Minister’s debut novel is based on the lives of the **Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) officers serving the country in violence-hit areas**. The novel’s plot revolves around the **massacre that unfolded on April 2010 in Dantewada in which 76 CRPF personnel were martyred**.

Bangladesh: First transgender elected as Union Parishad Chairperson

- A transgender person **Nazrul Islam Ritu** has been elected as the Chairperson of the Union Parishad of the **Trilochanpur Union of Kaliganj in Jhenaidha district of Bangladesh**. Ritu is the first transgender to be elected as Chairperson in the Union Parishad elections of Bangladesh.

Ace mountaineer Harshwanti Bisht elected as first woman president of Indian Mountaineering Foundation

- Noted mountaineer from Uttarakhand **Harshwanti Bisht** has earned the distinction of being elected the first woman president of the **Indian Mountaineering Foundation (IMF)**.
- She was elected to the coveted post on November 20, winning **60 out of a total of 107 votes**. It is for the first time that a woman has been elected as the president of the IMF, which was founded in the year 1958.

Senior Bureaucrat Alka Upadhyaya Appointed National Highways Authority of India Chief

- Senior bureaucrat **Alka Upadhyaya** has been appointed as the chairperson of **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)** as part of a major bureaucratic reshuffle effected by the Centre.
- **Ms Upadhyaya, a 1990-batch IAS officer of Madhya Pradesh cadre, is currently Additional Secretary, Department of Rural Development**. **Sanjay Bandopadhyay, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, has been named chairman, Inland Waterways Authority of India, a Personnel Ministry order said.**

Admiral Hari Kumar takes charge as new Indian Navy chief

- **Admiral R Hari Kumar** took charge as the new chief of the Indian Navy, replacing **Admiral Karambir Singh** who superannuated after serving over 41 years.
- **Admiral Hari Kumar is the twenty fifth Chief of the Naval Staff**. Admiral Hari Kumar is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, **Khadakwasla**. He was commissioned into the Indian Navy on January 1, 1983.

Indian-origin Gautam Raghavan elevated to Head of White House personnel office

- **Indian-origin Gautam Raghavan** has been elevated to **Head of the White House personnel office**. He replaces **Catherine Russel** who has been appointed **Executive Director of Unicef**. **Raghavan was Russel’s Deputy at the White House Office of Presidential Personnel**.
- **UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres** announced was appointing **Russel** to head the UN arm devoted to the welfare of children, and almost simultaneously **US President Joe Biden** appointed **Raghavan** to succeed her at the White House.

India’s T-Series becomes first channel globally to surpass 200 million subscribers on YouTube

- Raising the bar higher and shattering all records, **India’s largest music label and movie studio, T-Series** has crossed the milestone of **200 Million subscribers on YouTube, the first ever channel across the world to do so**.
- **The achievement comes after T-Series witnessed a remarkable growth, churning out not only finest music but also a wide range of films under its banner. With a cumulative of 29 channels across languages and genres, the total subscriber base for the T-Series network is more than 383 million with over 718 billion views.**

Gattipally Shivpal becomes India's first dwarf to obtain driving license

- Gattipally Shivpal, who hails from Hyderabad, has become the first dwarf in the country to obtain a driver's license.
- The 42-year-old man with a height of about three feet has beaten all odds and has become the first to complete his degree as a handicapped in his district Karimnagar. Shivpal finished his degree in 2004.

Indian-origin USAF doctor Anil Menon among 10 chosen by NASA for as astronauts future missions

- Indian-origin physician Anil Menon, a lieutenant colonel at the US Air Force, has been selected by NASA along with nine others to be astronauts for future missions, the American space agency has announced.
- SpaceX's first flight surgeon, helping to launch the company's first humans to space during NASA's SpaceX Demo-2 mission and building a medical organisation to support the human system during future missions.

Shaktikanta Das started his extended 3-year tenure as RBI governor

- Shaktikanta Das has started his extended three-year tenure as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor. The decision for this extension was taken by the appointments committee of the cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- He is the fifth governor to get tenure this long as RBI governors are usually given a five-year term. If completed, Shaktikanta Das will be the longest-serving governor of the central bank after Sir Benegal Rama Rau, who was in office for 7 years and 197 days between July 1, 1949, and January 14, 1957.
- Before him, the other four governors who served office for more than five years were Bimal Jalan, James Taylor, BP Bhattacharya and CD Deshmukh. Shaktikanta Das has held several positions in the state and central governments in the areas of finance, taxation, industries, and infrastructure. As the economic affairs secretary from 2015 to 2017, Das worked closely with the RBI and spearheaded the 2016 demonetisation of high-value currency notes.

U.N. appoints President Joe Biden advisor Catherine Russell to head UNICEF

- UNSC Secretary-General Antonio Guterres announced the appointment of Catherine Russell, an assistant to U.S. President Joe Biden, as the next head of the U.N. children's agency UNICEF.
- Ms. Russell also heads the White House Office of Presidential Personnel and served as the State Department's Ambassador-at-large for global women's issues from 2013 to 2017.

US' Victor Vescovo Becomes first person to touch All Four World's Deepest Ocean Trenches

- Victor Vescovo, a former US Navy commander touched the bottom of the Kermadec Trench in the South Pacific Ocean, which is the fourth deepest ocean trench. Vescovo reached a depth of 10,012 meters in an expedition that lasted for nine hours. With this achievement, the ex-officer is officially the first person to have touched all four deepest points in the ocean.
- With the Kermadec Trench being his newest achievement, Vescovo has also visited the Earth's deepest point-Challenger Deep in the Mariana Trench (10,925 metres), Horizon Deep in the Pacific's Tonga Trench (10,817 metres), and the Emden Deep in the Philippine Trench (10,045 metres), the third deepest point.

'Baahubali' star Prabhas tops UK newspaper's 2021 South Asian celebrity list, Priyanka Chopra takes 3rd place

- "Baahubali" star Prabhas has been named the number one South Asian celebrity in the world for 2021 by UK-based Eastern Eye weekly newspaper. The 42-year-old actor, known for Telugu blockbusters "Bujjigadu", "Billa", "Darling" and two "Baahubali" movies, was chosen for his ability to draw attention to regional language films in India for the annual '50 Asian Celebrities In The World' list, to be published in Eastern Eye.

- **Prabhas ranked ahead of many global stars from the world of film**, television, literature, music and social media and stood out for changing the face of the world's largest film industry. **The top 50 list celebrating South Asian stars who shone the brightest in 2021** is based on those who did incredible work, made a positive impact, broke boundaries, shattered glass ceilings, generated fan attention or were just inspiring in their own unique way.

Shashi Tharoor's latest book "The Battle of Belonging" launched by Prabha Khaitan Foundation

- **Author Shashi Tharoor shared details of his inspiration for writing "The Battle of Belonging"** and made a passionate plea to read this deeply-researched work. This book is the culmination of a lifetime's thoughts, readings and arguments on issues of nationalism and patriotism which are not just theoretical or academic but intensely personal too. The book was prompted by the rise of a fundamental challenge to the very essence of Indian nationalism.
- **The book offers one observer's note towards an understanding of nationalism** in the world against specificity in India. India's own anti-colonial nationalism converted itself into a 'civic nationalism' encoded in a democratic Constitution and then the conflict over contemporary attempts to convert that into a religious-cultural nationalism.

Amitabh Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan named in the list of Most Admired Men of 2021

- **The first name in the list is former US President Barack Obama followed by Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates.** As for popular Indian celebrities, the honorable Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi took the 8th position with Master Blaster, Sachin Tendulkar at 12th Spot.
- **Bollywood superstars Shah Rukh Khan and Amitabh Bachchan stood at 14th and 15th positions** respectively while the 18th spot was taken by Virat Kohli. Not just this, in the list of 'most admired women of 2021' first spot was bagged by Michelle Obama, who has been securing the first spot for the last 3 years. **Popular Bollywood-cum-Hollywood actress Priyanka Chopra was in the 10th spot with Aishwarya Rai Bachchan bagging the 13th place.**

Pradeep Kumar Rawat appointed as India's new envoy to China

- **Senior Indian diplomat Pradeep Kumar Rawat, who is well-versed in negotiating with Chinese diplomats, was appointed as India's next Ambassador to China.** Rawat will succeed Vikram Misri.

Guru Randhawa becomes first Indian male singer to cross 30 million followers on Instagram

- **Singer-songwriter Guru Randhawa has crossed 30 million followers on his Instagram, making him the first Indian male singer to have amassed such following.** Guru is known for chartbuster tracks like 'Lahore', 'High Rated Gabru', 'Ishare Tere' and the most recent 'Dance Meri Rani'.

Ravinder Bhakar assumes charge of NFDC, Films Division and CFSI

- **Ravinder Bhakar, CEO of Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has assumed charge of National Film Development Corporation (NFDC), Films Division, and Children Films Society of India (CFSI).**
- **Mr. Bhakar, a 1999-batch officer of Indian Railway Stores Service (IRSS), has been assigned these charges in addition to his present duties as CEO of the film certification body.**

Biden picks Caroline Kennedy, Michelle Kwan for ambassadors

- **Mr. Biden appointed another member of the Kennedy clan, Victoria Kennedy, an attorney and the widow of Sen. Ted Kennedy, to serve as his ambassador to Austria.**
- **President Joe Biden announced he's nominating Caroline Kennedy, the daughter of President John F. Kennedy who served as ambassador to Japan during the Obama administration, to serve as ambassador to Australia and Michelle Kwan, the renowned U.S. Olympic figure skater, to serve as his chief envoy to Belize.**

Biden announces intent to appoint four Indian-Americans to AANHPI Advisory Commission

- **U.S. President Joe Biden announced intent to appoint four Indian Americans Ajay Jain Bhutoria, Sonal Shah, Kamal Kalsi and Smita Shah as members of his Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders.**

- The Commission will advise the **President on ways the public, private, and non-profit sectors can work together to advance equity and opportunity for every Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) community**, the White House said.

Shalina Kumar is first Indian American to become federal judge in Michigan

- **Indian American Shalina D Kumar has become the first person of South Asian descent to be selected as a federal judge in Michigan. Kumar, who was Oakland County’s Chief Circuit Court Judge, was nominated by US President Joe Biden on 30 June to serve as the US District Court judge for the Eastern District.**

Indian-origin judge appointed to South Africa’s highest judicial bench

- **Narandran ‘Jody’ Kollapen, who is of Indian origin, has been appointed to South Africa’s highest judicial bench, the Constitutional Court.**
- **President Cyril Ramaphosa announced the appointment of 64-year-old Kollapen and Rammaka Steven Mathopo as the latest additions to the Constitutional Court after a lengthy process of public interviews. Kollapen and Mathopo were among the five candidates recommended to Ramaphosa in October this year for the two vacancies. Both have taken office from January 1, 2022.**

Vikram Misri appointed new deputy NSA

- **China expert and former Indian envoy to Beijing Vikram Misri was appointed deputy national security adviser in the national security council secretariat. Misri, a 1989 batch IFS officer, will come in place of Pankaj Saran who demits office on December 31, 2021.**

Anupam Ray to be India’s new permanent representative at UN Conference on Disarmament

- **Senior diplomat Anupam Ray has been appointed as India’s next permanent representative to the UN Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. Mr. Ray, a 1994-batch Indian Foreign Service officer, is currently serving as a joint secretary in the MEA’s headquarters in Delhi. “Anupam Ray (IFS:1994), presently joint secretary in the ministry, has been appointed as the next ambassador/PR (permanent representative) of India to the UN Conference on Disarmament, Geneva.”**

Vinay Kumar Tripathi appointed as new Chairman, CEO of Railway Board

- **Vinay Kumar Tripathi has been appointed as new Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Railway Board. The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Mr Tripathi who is presently working as General Manager, North Eastern Railway to the post of Chairman of Railway Board. Mr Tripathi belongs to 1983 Batch of Indian Railway Service of Electrical Engineers.**

Andhra Pradesh girl becomes first Indian to complete Nasa programme

- **Jahnvi Dangeti, a second-year engineering student from Palakollu of West Godavari, has been intrigued by the mysteries of the space and the distant planets since her childhood. But it is her grandmother, who sparked her interest further with her bedtime stories.**
- **An aspiring astronaut, Jahnvi, created history by being the only Indian to undergo International Air and Space Program (IASP) at Nasa Launch Operations’ Kennedy Space Centre in Alabama, US.**

Violet Baruah becomes first woman IG of Assam Police

- **Indian Police Services (IPS) officer Violet Baruah became the first-ever woman to get promoted to the rank of Inspector General in Assam Police. The Home Department of Assam government promoted Baruah, who received the President’s Police Medal for Distinguished Service this year, to the rank of Inspector General of Police with effect from January 1, 2022.**
- **The Assam Police’s senior most woman IPS officer, who is currently posted as the Deputy Inspector General of Police (BTAD) in Kokrajhar district, will be in the ‘Super Time Scale-II of IPS’ of pay matrix, it added.**

OBITUARIES

Ex-SC judge Nanavati, who probed Godhra and anti-Sikh riots, passes away at 86

- **Former Supreme Court judge Justice Girish Thakorlal Nanavati, who investigated the 1984 anti-Sikh and the 2002 Godhra riots, passed away.**
- **The commission was appointed in 2002 by the then Chief Minister Narendra Modi to probe the riots, that took place after the burning of two coaches of the Sabarmati Express train near the Godhra railway station, in which 59 ‘karsevaks’ died. It was to probe both the train burning incident and the subsequent communal violence in which over 1,000 people, mostly from the minority community, died.**
- **The commission gave a clean chit to the then Modi-led state government with regard to the riots. The riots were “not a pre-planned conspiracy or orchestrated violence,” and there was no substance in the allegation that state authorities turned a blind eye to the violence, the commission said.**
- **Earlier, Justice Nanavati was appointed to a one-man commission to investigate the 1984 anti-Sikh riots by the BJP-led NDA government in May 2000. The commission said in its report, submitted in 2005, that there was “credible evidence” against then Union Minister and Congress leader Jagdish Tytler, and also pointed to probable roles of various other Congress leaders. The riots had broken out following the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards on October 31, 1984.**

Greece’s former President Karolos Papoulias dies at 92

- **Veteran Greek politician Karolos Papoulias, who served as President of Greece at the height of the economic crisis of the 2010s, died at the age of 92.**

Anti-apartheid icon Desmond Tutu dies at 90

- **South African anti-apartheid icon Archbishop Desmond Tutu, described as the country’s moral compass, died aged 90, sparking an outpouring of tributes for the outspoken Nobel Peace Prize winner. Tutu, who had largely faded from public life in recent years, was remembered for his easy humour and characteristic smile – and above all his tireless fight against injustices of all colours.**

MISCELLANEOUS

Nagaland police launches ‘Call your Cop’ mobile App for citizens

- Nagaland DGP T. John Longkumer officially launched the ‘Call your Cop’ mobile App at Police Headquarters in Kohima. The App will enable all citizens of the state especially those in distress to get in touch directly with the police as easily available with just one click away.
- This initiative is also in keeping with the total modernization of the police department not only in Nagaland but all over the country. This is also on the drive to stop violence against weaker sections.

Arunachal Pradesh became the first state in the country to obtain an organic certification for its kiwis

- Kiwis of Ziro Valley — located in Lower Subansiri district — were certified as organic following a standard three-year-process.
- In October, Arunachal Pradesh became the first state in the country to obtain an organic certification for its kiwis.

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh launches unique Face Recognition Technology for Pensioners in New Delhi

- Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions Dr. Jitendra Singh launched unique Face Recognition Technology for Pensioners in New Delhi.
- He said that Face Recognition Technique of giving Life Certificate is a historic and far-reaching reform and this will bring ease of living for the retired and the elderly citizens.

AP govt disburses ₹686 cr under Vidya Deevana scheme

- Andhra Pradesh government has released ₹686 crore as the third tranche of the ‘Jagananna Vidya Deevana’ education assistance scheme. The amount has been credited to the accounts of 9.87 lakh mothers of 11.03 lakh students.

Shillong to host the famous Cherry Blossom Festival

- Shillong’s famous Cherry Blossom Festival is back this year after being cancelled due to COVID outbreak last year. Meghalaya’s capital city, Shillong has turned into a live painting with beautiful shades of purples and pinks. The annual Cherry Blossom Festival was cancelled and this year the event is planned between November 25 and 27.

Centre sets Price Stabilization Fund to moderate prices of agro commodities

- The Centre has set up the Price Stabilization Fund to tackle price volatility of agro commodities such as onion, potato, and pulses to protect the interests of consumers.
- The Minister said, buffer stocks of pulses and onion are maintained under price stabilization fund to moderate the prices. A buffer stock of more than two lakh metric tonnes of onion has been maintained in this fiscal year.

National Helpline against Atrocities on SCs, STs to be launched on Dec 13

- A National Helpline against Atrocities on Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes to be launched. Social Justice and Empowerment launched the helpline with an aim to ensure proper implementation of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act which was enacted with a view to preventing atrocities on members of SCs and STs.
- The Helpline will be available round the clock on toll-free number- 14566. The Service will be available in Hindi, English and Regional Language of the States and Union Territories. The objective of the helpline is to build informed awareness about the provisions of the Law that are aimed at ending discrimination and provide protection to all.

INA market becomes first ‘clean and fresh fruit and vegetable market’ in Delhi

- Delhi’s INA fruit and vegetable market becomes the first market to be certified as the ‘clean and fresh fruit and vegetable market’ in the national capital by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
- The FSSAI ‘Clean and Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Market’ aims to revolutionise fruit and vegetable markets by promoting availability of safe and hygienic fruits and vegetables to consumers.

Bharat Gaurav Trains: Southern Railway becomes Indian Railways’ first zone to get registered service provider

- Southern Railway becomes Indian Railways’ first zone to get the first Registered service provider under the newly launched ‘Bharat Gaurav Trains’ Scheme.
- The first-of-its-kind Bharat Gaurav Trains scheme was recently introduced by Indian Railways with the sole purpose of showcasing the country’s rich cultural heritage as well as magnificent historical places to the public. Under this scheme, Indian Railways will offer service providers, the “Right to Use” of its rakes.

Govt expands SCALE committee, appoints 3 new members

- The government has expanded the SCALE committee (Steering Committee for Advancing Local Value-Add and Exports) by adding three new members, hailing from diverse industry backgrounds, according to an industry insider.
- The new appointees are Panasonic India Chairman and CEO Manish Sharma, Toyota Kirloskar Vice-Chairman Vikram S Kirloskar, and Asian Paints co-promoter and Chairman Addverb Technologies Jalaj Dani.

Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Dr. Virendra Kumar launches National Helpline Against Atrocities in New Delhi

- Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Dr. Virendra Kumar launched a National Helpline Against Atrocities in New Delhi. The Helpline is now available round the clock on toll-free number 14566 across the country. The service is available in Hindi, English, and the regional language of the State and Union Territories. It will ensure proper implementation of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.
- It can be accessed by making a voice call either from a mobile or landline number of any Telecom Operator across the country. The Prevention of Atrocities Act was enacted with a prime objective view of preventing atrocities on members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The objective of the helpline is to build informed awareness about the provisions of the Law that are aimed at ending discrimination and providing protection to all.

PM Modi addresses at foundation stone laying of MaaUmiya Dham Development Project in Gujarat

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said, the Maa Umiya Dham Development Project in Gujarat is a perfect example of the notion of ‘Sabka Prayas’ as this auspicious project will be fulfilled with the efforts of all.
- The foundation stone laying of Maa Umiya Dham Development Project involving Umiya Mata Dham temple and temple premises in Gujarat via video conferencing.

Police’s e-learning platform ‘Unnati’

- The Delhi Police Commissioner, Rakesh Asthana launched an e-learning program “Unnati” in Delhi’s Southwest district. Police said that under the flagship scheme YUVA, the Unnati initiative will help the youth, specifically from weaker sections of the society and school dropouts, to get education, skills and realise their dreams to secure their future.

NCC, NHAI sign Memorandum of Understanding to reuse plastic wastes

- **National Cadet Corps, NCC, and National Highways Authority of India, NHAI** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding to reuse plastic wastes collected by NCC Cadets during Puneet Sagar Abhiyan and other Swachhta activities.
- **Plastic wastes collected is planned to be handed over to NHAI** which can use in road construction across the country. A total of three lakh forty thousand cadets from 127 coastal area NCC Units are participating in the month-long activity. So far, cadets at different locations of these areas have collected plastic wastes amounting to almost six tons. **The aim of Puneet Sagar Abhiyan is to propagate the message of the Importance of clean seashores and beaches amongst the local population.**

The Monk Who transformed UP: Book on Yogi Adityanath's journey released

- **A new book chronicles how Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath transformed the state** in various aspects like law and order, connectivity, education, health infrastructure, and overall growth.
- **Written by author Shantanu Gupta, "The Monk Who Transformed Uttar Pradesh: How Yogi Adityanath Changed UP Waala Bhaiya' abuse to a Badge of Honour",** is published by Garuda Prakashan.

Jharkhand to get eastern India's first State-run tribal research university

- **The Jharkhand Assembly gave its nod to Pandit Raghunath Murmu Tribal University Bill 2021,** paving the way for the state's first tribal university. The state already has a dedicated tribal research institute in Ranchi, the **Ram Dayal Munda Tribal Research Institute,** which offers courses on tribal research under Ranchi University.
- **Members of the tribal community form at least 26% of Jharkhand's total population of 3.29 crore, as per the 2011 Census.** There are a total of 32 tribe groups in the state with each one of them having different customs, history, traditions and dialects. Many researchers have divided tribal groups in Jharkhand on the basis of their traditions and practices. Some tribe groups are formed by hunters and gatherers, some by farmers and some even by artisans.

Jharkhand (meaning 'the land of forests') is a state in eastern India. The state shares its border with the states of Bihar to the north, Uttar Pradesh to the northwest, Chhattisgarh to the west, Odisha to the south and West Bengal to the east. **The city of Ranchi is its capital and Dumka its sub-capital. Hemant Soren is the current Chief Minister of Jharkhand. Ramesh Bais is serving as the current Governor of Jharkhand. The state was formed on 15 November 2000,** from the territory that had previously been part of Bihar.

Agriculture minister releases book titled "Spices Statistics at a Glance 2021"

- **Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar has released the book titled Spices Statistics at a Glance 2021'.** The book is a compendium of all the spices statistics like area, production, productivity, export, import, price and value of output of various spices produced in the country.
- **The book has been published by the Directorate of Arecanut and Spices Development,** the nodal agency for collection and compilation of area and production estimates of spices at the National level.

Northeast's first tea museum to come up at Dibrugarh in 2023

- **The first tea museum in the northeast region will come up in the "Tea City of India", Dibrugarh,** and will be officially opened to public in early 2023. 90% of work in the first phase of the project has been completed. An amount of Rs 3.14 crore has been sanctioned by the North East Council (NEC) and Assam government for the first phase of the project.

Kerala delivers India's first great superhero film

- **Kerala has delivered India's first great superhero movie. With Basil Joseph's new Malayalam film Minnal Murali,** streaming on Netflix, India has finally cracked the superhero formula.

- **Set in a semi-rural Kerala town, Minnal Murali follows Jaison (Tovino Thomas) who develops superpowers after getting struck by lightning.** All is well until Jaison finds his nemesis in Selvan (Govind Somasundaram), another man in the town who was struck by lightning on the same night.

Delhi Cabinet approves setting up of Delhi Teachers' University

- **Delhi Cabinet approved setting up of Delhi Teachers' University, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced.** The university will offer a four-year integrated teacher education programme after Class 12, in which BA and BEd, BSc and Bed, and BCom and BEd courses will be incorporated.

Delhi bordered by Haryana on three sides and by Uttar Pradesh to the east. According to the 2011 census, Delhi city proper's population was over 11 million, the second-highest in India after Mumbai. Anil Baijal is the current & 21st Lieutenant Governor of Delhi. Arvind Kejriwal is the current and 7th Chief Minister of Delhi. The Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991 declared the Union Territory of Delhi to be formally known as the National Capital Territory of Delhi. Delhi is a Union Territory with a legislature, and it came into being in 1991 under Article 239AA of the Constitution inserted by the Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991.

Education Minister launched 100-day Reading Campaign 'Padhe Bharat'

- **Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched 100-day Reading Campaign 'Padhe Bharat'.** The reading campaign aims to have participation of all stakeholders at national and state level including children, teachers, parents, community and educational administrators.
- **The campaign marks an important step to improve learning levels of students as it develops creativity, critical thinking, vocabulary and the ability to express both verbally and in writing.** It will help children to relate to their surroundings and real life situation. **Children studying in Balvatika to grade eight will be part of this campaign.** The reading campaign will be organised till 10th of April next year.

Three-day Kashi Indian International Film Festival begins in Varanasi

- **The first three-day Kashi Indian International Film Festival begins in Varanasi.** The Festival will showcase glimpses of Indian classical music and dance, and events on famous philosophers, poets, writers, and musicians. **The festival is being organized by Information and Broadcasting Ministry in collaboration with film bandhu and the Uttar Pradesh government.**

Delhi govt's colour-coded action plan to fight Covid-19

- **The Delhi government notified a colour-coded action plan** under which the level of restrictions in markets, industries, offices and public transport will be **determined based on the Covid-19 test positivity rate, new cases, and occupancy of oxygen beds in hospitals.** And the restrictions have been classified under Yellow, Amber, Orange and Red alerts. **While Yellow is the lowest level of alert, Red is the highest, which will bring the city under a complete lockdown.**

Davangere to get India's first mobile haemophilia service unit

- **The Karnataka Haemophilia Society based is all set to launch a haemophilia mobile service unit, covering 100 km in the region.** The mobile service unit will be **launched in association with Rotary International, south Davangere, in order to provide treatment to haemophilia families** at their doorsteps. **This initiative is a first of its kind in the country.** The Society aims to detect haemophilia among people at the earliest and provide treatment to them so that permanent disability can be prevented.

NITI Aayog VC Dr Rajiv Kumar inaugurates national-level workshop on bamboo development

- **NITI Aayog organized a day-long national-level workshop on bamboo development in New Delhi.** Science and Technology Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh, NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Dr. Rajiv Kumar, NITI Aayog Member Dr. VK Saraswat, and CEO Amitabh Kant inaugurated the workshop.
- **NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Dr Rajiv Kumar said, ranging from conventional use to radical innovation like bio-energy, the bamboo industry contributes to 35 billion dollars in the GDP.** He said, growing at a steady

rate of five percent compound annual growth rate, the global bamboo market has immense potential, and leveraging India's strengths can prove to be a great catalyst of growth.

- Several stakeholders from India and abroad are attending the workshop to understand the opportunities and challenges in the bamboo sector. NITI Aayog is in the process of formulating pragmatic policies and technologies for the holistic development of the Indian bamboo industry.

Uttar Pradesh Gets Its First Water Sports Complex in Gorakhpur

- **Uttar Pradesh got its first water sports complex at Ramgarh Tal. Inaugurated by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the water sports complex at the lake is the first in the state** which has been constructed by the public sector. The complex is spread on a 5-acre area near Ramgarh Tal, which is spread over 1,700 acres. The facility of boating, water biking, skiing is available at the complex.

Jai Ram Thakur launches online RTI portal in Himachal

- **Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur launched the online RTI portal** of the department of administrative reforms. With this Himachal Pradesh became the first state amongst small states and fourth after Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Uttar Pradesh to launch the portal.
- The CM while appreciating the efforts of the department in launching **this online portal said it would facilitate the citizens to apply, get information and appeal under the RTI Act, 2005, at their doorsteps without visiting any office or public authority.**

World Sangeet Tansen festival held in Madhya Pradesh

- **World Sangeet Tansen festival is held in Madhya Pradesh. The festival was organised till December 30th in Gwalior. This is the 97th edition of the festival.** The stage of the program has been constructed on the theme of Siddhanath temple situated in Omkareshwar.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Nation celebrates National Organ Donation Day on 27th Nov

- **In India, the ‘National Organ Donation Day’ is observed every year on 27 November** since past 10 years. The day aims to promote awareness and recognize the selfless contribution made by deceased donors to healthcare and mankind re-instill our faith in humanity. 2021 marks the 12th National Organ Donation Day. It is organised by the National Organ & Tissue Transplant Organization (NOTTO) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- **Organ donation is retrieving a donor’s organ like heart, liver, kidneys, intestines, lungs, and pancreas** after the donor is deceased and then transplanting into another person who is in need of an organ. In India, organ donation has always been on a small scale. **As per estimates, only 0.65 organ donations per million population take place in the country.**
- There has been a considerable decline in organ donation in India as well as the **entire world due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There are only three percent registered organ donors in India.**
- As per the 2019 data of the **All Institute of Medical Sciences, annually 1.5 to two lakh people require a kidney transplant. But only around 8,000, meaning four percent people get it.** Similarly, every year around 80,000 patients require a liver transplant, but only 1,800 eventually get it.
- Around one lakh patients require corneal or eye transplants annually, but less than half of people get it. **Even for a heart transplant, of the 10,000 who need a heart transplant, only 200 matches with donors.**

Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare, 30 November

- **The Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, at its 20th Session, decided that a memorial Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare was observed on 30 November each year or, when appropriate, on the first day of the regular session of the Conference.** The only appropriate tribute to the victims of chemical warfare is to rid the world of chemical weapons once and for all.

World AIDS Day 1 December

- **Every year, on 1 December, the world commemorates World AIDS Day.** People around the world unite to show support for people living with and affected by HIV and to remember those who lost their lives to AIDS. This World AIDS Day, UNAIDS is highlighting the urgent need to end the inequalities that drive AIDS and other pandemics around the world.
- **The Theme of Worlds Aids Day 2021 is “End inequalities. End AIDS”.**

International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, 2 December

- **The International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, 2 December, marks the date of the adoption, by the General Assembly, of the United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others.**
- **The focus of this day is on eradicating contemporary forms of slavery, such as trafficking in persons, sexual exploitation, the worst forms of child labour, forced marriage, and the forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.**
- **2021 Theme: “Ending Slavery’s Legacy of Racism: A Global Imperative for Justice”.**

International Volunteer Day 5 December

- **The United Nations Volunteers Programme (UNV) coordinates International Volunteer Day on 5 December every year to recognize and promote the tireless work, not just of UN Volunteers, but of volunteers across the globe.** Every day, volunteers dedicate time and effort to ensure the inclusion of those often left behind, drive climate action and advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- **2021 Theme: Volunteer now for our common future.**

World Soil Day 5 December

- **World Soil Day (WSD) is held annually on 5 December** as a means to focus attention on the importance of healthy soil and to advocate for the sustainable management of soil resources. An international day to celebrate soil was recommended by the International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS) in 2002. Under the leadership of the Kingdom of Thailand and within the framework of the Global Soil Partnership, FAO has supported the formal establishment of WSD as a global awareness raising platform.
- **The theme for World Soil Day 2021 is “Halt soil salinization, enhance soil production”.**

International Civil Aviation Day 7 December

- In 1996 the United Nations General Assembly **proclaimed that 7 December was to be the International Civil Aviation Day. The day has been celebrated by the International Civil Aviation Organization since 7 December 1994, the 50th anniversary of the signing the Convention on International Civil Aviation.**
- The Council has decided that from now until 2023, the **theme will be: “Advancing Innovation for Global Aviation Development”.**

International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime, 9 December

- **9 December 2021 marks the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime, as well as the 73rd anniversary of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (the “Genocide Convention”), the first human rights treaty adopted by the General Assembly.**
- **The Convention signifies the international community’s commitment to “never again” and provides the first international legal definition of “genocide,” widely adopted at national and international levels. It also establishes a duty for State Parties to prevent and punish the crime of genocide.**

International Anti-Corruption Day 9 December

- **The Assembly also designated 9 December as International Anti-Corruption Day, to raise awareness of corruption and of the role of the Convention in combating and preventing it.**
- International Anti-corruption day 2021’s **theme is “Your right, your role: say no to corruption.”**

Human Rights Day

- **Human Rights Day is celebrated annually around the world on 10 December every year. The date was chosen to honor the United Nations General Assembly’s adoption and proclamation, on 10 December 1948, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the first global enunciation of human rights and one of the first major achievements of the new United Nations.**
- The United Nations has announced that the **theme of Human Rights Day this year will be “equality”.** It has taken the theme from Article 1 of the UDHR, which says: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”

International Mountain Day celebrated

- **The International Mountain Day is being celebrated on 11th of December every year. The day aims to encourage sustainable development in mountains. The increasing attention to the importance of mountains led the UN to declare 2002 the UN International Year of Mountains. The International Day was celebrated for the first time the following year, 2003.**
- **The theme of this year’s International Mountain Day is ‘Sustainable mountain tourism’.**

Human Rights Day

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- The United Nations has announced that the **theme of Human Rights Day this year will be “equality”**. It has taken the **theme from Article 1 of the UDHR**, which says: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”

National Energy Conservation Day observed

- **National Energy Conservation Day is observed on December 14, every year.** The day focuses on making people aware of global warming and climate change and promotes efforts towards saving energy resources.
- **The Government of India has set up Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) on 1st March 2002 under the provision of the Energy Conservation Act, 2001.** The BEE is a constitutional body that works under the Indian Government and helps in the development of policies and strategies to reduce the use of energy. **World Energy Conservation Day is also observed.** It focuses on making people aware of global warming and climate change and promoting efforts towards saving energy resources.

International Day of Neutrality 12 December

- On 2 February 2017, the UN General Assembly adopted without a vote resolution **introduced by Turkmenistan, recognized by the UN as a permanently neutral state since 12 December 1995** — which noted the link between the **preservation of peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and declared 12 December as the International Day of Neutrality.** Neutrality is defined as a legal status which arises when the state decides not to take part in any armed conflict.

Vijay Diwas 2021

- **Vijay Diwas is celebrated on December 16 every year to honour the victory of Indian armed forces over Pakistan in the 1971 war.** On December 16, 1971, India had won the war against Pakistan after fighting for 13 days. The chief of the Pakistani forces, **General Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi surrendered to the joint forces of Indian Army and Bangladesh’s Mukti Bahini, along with 93,000 Pakistani troops.** It was also the **biggest-ever military surrender after World War II.** The 1971 India-Pakistan War culminated on this day 50 years ago as East Pakistan ceased to exist. This day is remembered for the bravery of Indian and Bangladeshi troops.

Arabic Language Day 18 December

- **UN Arabic Language Day is observed annually on December 18.** The event was established by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2010 seeking “to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity as well as to promote equal use of all six of its official working languages throughout the organization”.
- **December 18 was chosen as the date for the Arabic language as it is “the day in 1973 when the General Assembly approved Arabic as an official UN language”.** This year, the **theme of the World Arabic Language Day is “Arabic Language, a bridge between civilisations”.**

International Migrants Day 18 December

- **International Migrants Day (18 December) this year falls almost exactly 70 years after the Brussels conference that led to the establishment of the organization that, in 1989, was renamed the International Organization for Migration.** A broad range of factors continue to determine the movement of people. **2021 theme: “Harnessing the potential of human mobility”**

Minorities Rights Day

- **December 18 was declared as the Minorities Rights Day back in 1992 by the United Nations.** The UN had adopted the statement on the individual’s Rights belonging to religious or Linguistic National or Ethnic Minorities.
- In India, it is the responsibility of the National Commission for Minorities (NCM) to carry out the events on this day. **The NCM was established by the Union Government under the National Commission for Minorities Act, in 1992.**

International Human Solidarity Day 20 December

- The General Assembly, on 22 December 2005, by resolution identified solidarity as one of the fundamental and universal values that should underlie relations between peoples in the twenty-first century, and in that regard decided to **proclaim 20 December of each year International Human Solidarity Day**.
- **The theme is centered around promoting cultural equality, social justice that is directed towards human and social development (specifically in developing countries).** The theme remains the same every year.

National Mathematics Day

- **India celebrates National Mathematics Day on December 22 every year. The day marks the birth anniversary of famous mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan.** In 2012, then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh Declared the date as National Mathematics Day to honor the great man.
- **The 2015 movie ‘The Man Who Knew Infinity’ was released based on Srinivasa Ramanujan’s biography.** It describes the mathematician’s life and journey towards establishing the famed mathematical theories.
- **As mentioned in Ramanujan’s biography ‘The Man Who Knew Infinity’ by Robert Knaigel, GH Hardy once went to visit Ramanujan at a hospital. Mr Hardy told him that he came in a taxi with the number ‘1729’ which seemed to be an ordinary number. Ramanujan said that it was not. 1729, later termed the Hardy-Ramanujan Number, is the smallest number which can be expressed as the sum of two different cubes in two different ways, he said.**

National Farmers’ Day

- **Kisan Diwas or National Farmers’ Day is observed every year in India on December 23 to commemorate the birth anniversary of Chaudhary Charan Singh, a prominent farmers’ leader and the fifth Prime Minister of India.** Chaudhary Charan Singh held the post of the PM between 1979 and 1980. **Kisan Diwas 2021 is celebrated to honor the contributions of the Indian farmers as well as to glorify their significance in building the country.**

National Consumer Rights Day

- **National Consumer Rights Day is observed on 24 December annually** with a particular theme across the country. The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 had received the assent of the president on this day.
- No doubt it is considered a historic milestone in the consumer movement in the country. This day also provides awareness about consumer rights and responsibilities. Every year, **a theme is allocated to the celebrations and this year the theme is ‘tackling plastic pollution’.**

National Consumer Day observed to spread awareness about rights, responsibilities of consumer

- **National Consumer Day is observed on 24 December annually to highlight the importance of the consumer movement** and spread awareness about the rights and responsibilities of every consumer. On this day the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 was enacted.
- **This year’s theme of National Consumer Day is “Tackling Plastic Pollution”.** India was plagued by exploitations of consumers. The problems were further aggravated by inflation and poor technology. To solve these problems, the Consumer Protection Bill was passed in 1986. December 24 was marked as the National Consumer Day under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986. Since then, December 24 has been observed as the National Consumer Day. The Act aims to provide consumers with effective safeguards against different types of exploitation, such as defective goods, deficiency in services and unfair trade practices.

National Energy Conservation Day

- **The National Energy Conservation Day is observed on December 14th, every year by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE).** The day focuses on making people aware of global warming and climate change and promotes efforts towards saving energy resources.
- This year, the theme for the competition is **‘AzadikaAmritMahotsav: Energy Efficient India’** and **‘AzadikaAmritMahotsav: Cleaner Planet’.** The State level painting competitions will be organized from 1st to 10th December 2021 in all States and Union Territories of the country.

Global Family Day

- **Global Family Day, One Day of Peace and Sharing**, is celebrated every **January 1** in the United States as a global day of peace and sharing. **Global Family Day** grew out of the **United Nations Millennium** celebration, “**One Day In Peace**”.

World Braille Day 4 January

- **Every year on January 04, World Braille Day** is observed to raise the importance of **Braille**, which serves as a communication medium for blind and partially sighted people. **This day is marked** as the **birth anniversary of Louis Braille**, who was the **inventor of Braille**, born on **January 04, 1809, in France**.
- **World Braille Day, celebrated since 2019**, is observed to raise awareness of the importance of Braille as a means of communication in the full realization of the human rights for blind and partially sighted people.



Career
Launcher

QUESTIONS

- Which of the following cities has become the first Indian city to start ropeway service as a mode of public transport?
(a) Prayagraj (b) Hardwar (c) Varanasi (d) Shimla
- Which of the following countries gets world's first operational dual-mode bus and rail vehicle?
(a) India (b) Japan (c) Norway (d) Sweden
- Recently, Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat launched River Cities Alliance and National Urban River Management Plan for _____.
(a) Hardwar (b) Rishikesh (c) Varanasi (d) Kanpur
- Which of the following countries President Klaus Iohannis has nominated Defence Minister Nicolae Ciuca to form a new government as Prime Minister recently?
(a) Romania (b) Nicaragua (c) Madagascar (d) Peru
- The World's first floating city is to set sail in _____ by 2025.
(a) South Korea (b) Vietnam (c) Russia (d) Chile
- Which of the following companies has entered the World Index list of companies in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI) 2021 recently?
(a) Jeep (b) Mahindra & Mahindra
(c) Tata Motors (d) Ford
- Which of the following Asian countries has been elected to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee for 2021-25?
(a) Bangladesh (b) Japan (c) India (d) Maldives
- Name the first power lifter from India to clinch a medal in the World Para Powerlifting Championships recently.
(a) Gautam Rathi (b) Anmol Veer (c) Gunjan Mathur (d) Paramjeet Kumar
- Who is the first Indian to score a century and a half-century on Test debut recently?
(a) Axar Patel (b) Shreyas Iyer (c) Venkatesh Iyer (d) Prithvi Shaw
- Name the noted mountaineer from Uttarakhand who has earned the distinction of being elected the first woman president of the Indian Mountaineering Foundation (IMF)?
(a) Anamika Jain (b) Pallavi Mathur (c) Harshwanti Bisht (d) Manorama Tewari
- Ratan Nag project is located in _____.
(a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Jammu & Kashmir (c) Uttarakhand (d) Sikkim
- Name the Hyderabad-based startup which has successfully demonstrated the country's first privately developed cryogenic rocket engine named Dhawan-1 after eminent rocket scientist Satish Dhawan.
(a) Aniruddh Aerospace (b) Skyroot Aerospace
(c) Mistech Aerospace (d) Kalyani Aerospace
- Name the Indian tennis player who won his maiden Challenger level singles title.
(a) Dev Gautam (b) Ramkumar Ramanathan
(c) Devranjan Verma (d) Amit Kulshrestha
- Who will succeed the Twitter's current CEO Jack Dorsey?
(a) Deven Mohanthy (b) Parag Agrawal
(c) Greem Smith (d) Neven Thyuin

15. Recently, “Ring Wandering” won the top honour at the closing ceremony of the 52nd edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI). This movie is in _____ language.
(a) American (b) Swedish (c) Japanese (d) Chinese
16. Recently, Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) has received approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to raise LIC’s stake in the bank up to _____ per cent from the current 4.96 per cent it has in the private lender.
(a) 6.12 (b) 7.38 (c) 9.99 (d) 11.45
17. Who has been turned as author with her debut novel ‘Lal Salaam’?
(a) Kangana Ranaut (b) Smriti Zubin Irani (c) Konkana Sen (d) Maneka Gandhi
18. Name the first transgender to be elected as Chairperson in the Union Parishad elections of Bangladesh.
(a) Nazrul Islam Ritu (b) Mohidduddin Rayini
(c) Nayeem Khan (d) Shamim Ahmed
19. The Memorial Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare is observed on _____.
(a) 26 November (b) 30 November (c) 2 December (d) 5 December
20. Which of the following has become the world’s newest republic and in doing so removes the Queen as its head of state?
(a) Barbados (b) Suriname (c) Fiji (d) Maldives
21. Which of the following banks announced the launch of FIRST Private Infinite, India’s first-ever standalone metal debit card, in partnership with Visa, the global leader in digital payments?
(a) HDFC (b) IDFC FIRST (c) ICICI (d) Bandhan
22. Which of the following states officially launched the ‘Call your Cop’ mobile App recently?
(a) Sikkim (b) Nagaland (c) Mizoram (d) Manipur
23. The latest findings of the NFHS survey have revealed that India’s national Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has fallen below the replacement level for the first time. The national Total Fertility Rate was found to be _____ in the NFHS 2015-16 survey, down from 2.7 in the NFHS 2005-06 survey.
(a) 2.5 (b) 2.4 (c) 2.2 (d) 1.9
24. Which is India’s first and only International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) where banks, stock exchanges and financial services firms have set up their global operations?
(a) Haryana International Finance Tec City
(b) Punjab International Finance Tec City
(c) Himachal Pradesh International Finance Tec City
(d) Gujarat International Finance Tec City
25. Who won the 2021 Ballon d’Or, adding the seventh golden ball to his account?
(a) Neymar Jr (b) Cristiano Ronaldo (c) Lionel Messi (d) Luka Modric
26. According to Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), which is now the world’s most expensive city to live in?
(a) Madrid (b) Paris (c) Tel Aviv (d) Lisbon
27. The world commemorates World AIDS Day every year on _____.
(a) 26 November (b) 29 November (c) 1 December (d) 3 December
28. Who took charge as the new chief of the Indian Navy?
(a) Admiral Karambir Singh (b) Admiral M K Jha
(c) Admiral P N Ahuja (d) Admiral R Hari Kumar

29. Recently, Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions Dr. Jitendra Singh launched unique Face Recognition Technology for _____ in New Delhi.
(a) Students (b) Pensioners (c) Army Personal (d) Widows
30. The famous Cherry Blossom Festival is of _____, and is back this year after being cancelled due to COVID outbreak last year.
(a) Aizawl (b) Shillong (c) Guwahati (d) Gangtok
31. The Indian Railways is constructing the world's tallest railway bridge pier at Noney Valley in the state of _____ with a height of 141 metres.
(a) Mizoram (b) Manipur (c) Meghalaya (d) Tripura
32. According to the 2021 edition of the 10th Annual World Cooperative Monitor (WCM) report published by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA). Which of the following has been ranked 'number one Cooperative' among the top 300 cooperatives in the world?
(a) IFFCO (b) SIDBI (c) State Bank of India (d) NABARD
33. Recently, The Centre has formed a three-member committee to review the _____ annual income limit to identify economically weaker section (EWS) for providing 10% quota in public jobs and educational institutions.
(a) ₹4 lakh (b) ₹6 lakh (c) ₹8 lakh (d) ₹10 lakh
34. Which of the following country navies and the US military personnel kicked off the annual Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) maritime exercise?
(a) India (b) Bangladesh (c) Pakistan (d) Malaysia
35. India-based businesses are gearing up for their first Middle East edition of India Global Forum at _____.
(a) Abu Dhabi (b) Masdar (c) Dubai (d) Sharjah
36. Which of the following states became the first state in the country to obtain an organic certification for its kiwis?
(a) Sikkim (b) Arunachal Pradesh (c) Meghalaya (d) Manipur
37. Recently, Indian tech wizard Parag Agrawal took over as CEO of the social media platform _____.
(a) Facebook (b) Whatsapp (c) Google (d) Twitter
38. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated InFinity Forum, a thought leadership Forum on FinTech via video conferencing. Which is not among partner countries in the first edition of the Forum?
(a) Indonesia (b) South Africa (c) Russia (d) U.K.
39. Which of the following countries had carried out another successful test of its Zircon hypersonic cruise missile?
(a) Japan (b) China (c) Russia (d) India
40. Which of the following released the report 'Designing the Future of Dispute Resolution: the ODR Policy Plan for India', to scale dispute avoidance, containment, and resolution online?
(a) NITI Aayog (b) NABARD (c) RBI (d) Ministry of Finance
41. Recently, Two COVID-19 cases of the Omicron variant have been detected in India in _____.
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Karnataka (d) Kerala
42. Recently, which of the following airports has been adjudged the 'Best Airport in India and Central Asia' this year by Skytrax?
(a) Indira Gandhi International Airport
(b) Rajiv Gandhi International Airport
(c) Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel International Airport
(d) Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport

43. Few Asian countries have been opened up for the creation of a prospective trilateral which can be termed as JIV. Which of the following countries is not part of “JIV”?
- (a) Japan (b) India (c) Vietnam (d) Indonesia
44. Which of the following African countries has promised to end child marriage by 2030 in line with the African Union’s campaign to end child marriages in the continent?
- (a) South Sudan (b) Egypt (c) Eritrea (d) Somalia
45. Which of the following has been launched within the Nifty Bharat Bond index series recently?
- (a) Nifty Bharat Bond Index – June 2024
(b) Nifty Bharat Bond Index – February 2028
(c) Nifty Bharat Bond Index – April 2032
(d) Nifty Bharat Bond Index – July 2036
46. In India, Uber launched ride-booking via WhatsApp on a pilot basis in _____.
- (a) New Delhi (b) Lucknow (c) Kolkata (d) Varanasi
47. The world’s first currency developed in the 7th century is _____.
- (a) Japan (b) South Korea (c) Vietnam (d) China
48. Recently, Astronomers have found a giant, hot exoplanet named TOI-2109b that orbits around its star once every _____.
- (a) 8 hours (b) 12 hours (c) 16 hours (d) 24 hours
49. Recently, who has been awarded the Woman of the Year Award by World Athletics (WA) for grooming talent in the country and advocating gender equality?
- (a) Karnam Malleshwari (b) Anju Bobby George
(c) Sania Mirza (d) Konneru Hampi
50. Whose biography by Dinyar Patel was recently named winner of the Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay NIF Book Prize 2021?
- (a) G K Gokhale (b) Dadabhai Naoroji
(c) Bal Gangadhar Tilak (d) Mahatma Gandhi
51. Recently, Three countries have joined the G20 Troika. Which of the following is not included in the Troika?
- (a) Indonesia (b) Iran (c) Italy (d) India
52. Recently, India and _____ have agreed to step up their Clean Energy and Climate Partnership.
- (a) BRICS (b) European Union (EU)
(c) ASEAN (d) G-20
53. Which of the following banks listed its \$650-million green bonds simultaneously on the India International Exchange (India INX) and the Luxembourg Stock Exchange?
- (a) Punjab National Bank (PNB) (b) State Bank of India (SBI)
(c) Canara Bank (d) Union Bank of India (UBI)
54. According to the data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), which of the following states has pipped to emerge the largest manufacturing hub in the country?
- (a) Maharashtra (b) Gujarat (c) Haryana (d) West Bengal
55. Who among the following will become the first deputy managing director of IMF, serving under IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva?
- (a) Kaushik Basu (b) Gita Gopinath (c) Viral V Acharya (d) Raghuram Rajan

56. Which of the following banks has launched India's first ever Nifty Alpha 50 ETF called the Kotak Nifty Alpha 50 ETF?
(a) HDFC Mutual Fund (b) ICICI Mutual Fund
(c) Kotak Mahindra Mutual Fund (d) Axis Mutual Fund
57. Recently, Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeve Chandrasekhar launched the first indigenous server _____ developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) under the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM).
(a) Shiva (b) Rudra (c) Krishna (d) Shaurya
58. Who have been named the BWF Male and Female Player of the Year respectively in recognition of their stellar runs this season?
(a) Andy Murray and Nozomi Okuhara (b) Viktor Axelsen and Tai Tzu Ying
(c) Vishwanathan Anand and Serena Williams (d) Max Verstappen and Carolina Marin
59. Which of the following conservation projects gets two UNESCO Awards recently?
(a) Agrasen ki Bawli (b) Nizamuddin Basti
(c) Rani ki Vav (d) Sun Temple Konark
60. Name the eminent Indian-American mathematician who has been jointly selected for the inaugural Ciprian Foias Prize in Operator Theory by American Mathematical Society (AMS) recently.
(a) Atul Mahajan (b) Nikhil Srivastava
(c) Mukesh Dhanjani (d) Gaurav Kirpal
61. The 11th edition of Exercise EKVURIN between _____ will be conducted.
(a) India and Malaysia (b) India and Seychelles (c) India and Maldives (d) India and Sri Lanka
62. On the occasion of Asom Divas or Assam Day, the state Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced to confer the most prestigious 'Asom Baibhav' award to the industrialist _____.
(a) Anand Mahindra (b) Ratan Tata (c) Gautam Adani (d) Mukesh Ambani
63. Which of the following became the first state in India to achieve 100 per cent vaccination against COVID-19 among all eligible adults?
(a) Haryana (b) Punjab (c) Goa (d) Himachal Pradesh
64. Recently, 5th Indian Ocean Conference began in _____.
(a) Dubai (b) Abu Dhabi (c) Jeddah (d) Masdar
65. Recently, which of the following has become the first school in Uttar Pradesh to be integrated into the PASCH network?
(a) Ghaziabad's Nehru World School (NWS) (b) Noida's Gurukul Public School
(c) Lucknow's City Montessori School (d) Varanasi's Sunbeam school
66. Recently, Polls have opened in _____ for the first election since former President Yahya Jammeh left office and fled the country in 2017.
(a) The Gambia (b) Tanzania (c) Djibouti (d) Eritrea
67. Who has been appointed as the Chairman of India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) recently?
(a) Prakash Javadekar (b) Sambit Patra (c) Amit Mitra (d) Babul Supriyo
68. Which of the following teams won the title after 16 years in the men's hockey Junior World Cup at the Kalinga Stadium?
(a) Germany (b) Argentina (c) Russia (d) India

69. The United Nations Volunteers Programme (UNV) coordinates International Volunteer Day on _____ every year to recognize and promote the tireless work, not just of UN Volunteers, but of volunteers across the globe.
(a) 27 November (b) 2 December (c) 5 December (d) 8 December
70. Who of the following won recently India's first silver medal in shotput in the F-20 category at the Asia Youth Paralympic Games in Manama, Bahrain recently?
(a) Ananya Bansal (b) Aditi Bharadwaj (c) Meenakshi Jha (d) Amrita Rao
71. Name the Economic corridor which will also have Asia's largest wildlife elevated corridor (12 km) for unrestricted wildlife movement.
(a) Delhi-Meerut Economic Corridor
(b) Delhi-Lucknow Economic Corridor
(c) Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor
(d) Delhi-Mumbai Economic Corridor
72. Name the Hyderabad-based startup which has successfully demonstrated India's first privately developed cryogenic rocket engine named Dhawan-1.
(a) Skyroot Aerospace (b) Unique Aerospace (c) Command Aerospace (d) Xerographic Aerospace
73. Recently, The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment announced the formation of a _____ member committee to review the criteria for Economically Weaker Section (EWS) reservations.
(a) Two (b) Three (c) Four (d) Six
74. Name the cyclone which if hits Odisha coast as predicted, will be the first one to do so to the state in December in India Meteorological Department (IMD)'s nearly 130 years of recorded history.
(a) Cyclone Jawad (b) Cyclone Unique (c) Cyclone Mirage (d) Cyclone Sharad
75. The World Soil Day (WSD) is held annually on _____ as a means to focus attention on the importance of healthy soil and to advocate for the sustainable management of soil resources.
(a) 1 December (b) 3 December (c) 5 December (d) 7 December
76. Recently, which of the following countries and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have concluded their first joint naval exercise?
(a) Russia (b) China (c) Japan (d) South Korea
77. Recently, who has been conferred with the "Legend Award" by Sanctuary Nature Foundation?
(a) Adwin Jane (b) Jane Goodall (c) Michael Fredrick (d) Dimitry Uzuluck
78. Name the shuttler who settled for a silver medal in the summit clash of the BWF World Tour Finals.
(a) PV Sindhu (b) Carolina Marin (c) Saina Nehwal (d) An Seyoung
79. Who among the following along with a student of BITS Pilani was conferred the United Nations V-award for his commitment to the welfare of orphans and underserved children?
(a) Amit Rathaur (b) Akarsh Shroff (c) Ashwin Bonappa (d) Deepak Luthra
80. Who among the following created history by taking all 10 wickets in an innings of the test match and became the third bowler?
(a) Ajaz Patel (b) Tim Southee
(c) William Sommervielle (d) Rachin Ravindra
81. Recently, The Centre has initiated a Scheme for the Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages of India. The scheme at present covers _____ languages.
(a) 74 (b) 87 (c) 99 (d) 117

82. Recently, Adama Barrow has comfortably won a second term in presidential election of _____.
(a) Eritrea (b) Djibouti (c) The Gambia (d) Somalia
83. For the first time in the country, two cities in _____ are rising to the status of global learning cities
(a) Karnataka (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Kerala (d) Andhra Pradesh
84. Recently, Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Dr Virendra Kumar launched _____ for socio-economic upliftment and overall development of Scheduled Castes students.
(a) SAARTHAK (b) SUVIDHA
(c) SRESHTA (d) NAYAK
85. Who will be appointed as Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) President?
(a) Rajeev Sahota (b) Sanjiv Mehta
(c) Aneesh Ranjan (d) Bhupesh Patel
86. Which of the following two countries have vowed to deepen collaboration in the space sector, including in the human spaceflight programme, and signed an agreement for cooperation in the building as well as operation of launch vehicles?
(a) India and Japan (b) India and Australia
(c) India and France (d) India and Russia
87. Who won the Saudi Arabian Grand Prix, recently?
(a) Lewis Hamilton (b) Charles Lecrec (c) Max Verstappen (d) Valtteri Bottas
88. Who became the first cricketer ever to register 50 wins or more in each of the three formats of the game recently?
(a) Kane Williamson (b) Virat Kohli (c) Rohit Sharma (d) Ross Taylor
89. Which of the following companies has crossed the milestone of 200 Million subscribers on YouTube, the first ever channel across the world to do so?
(a) HMV (b) T-Series (c) Venus (d) Tips
90. Who has become the first dwarf in the country to obtain a driver's license recently?
(a) Anit Yadav (b) Dushyant Jayant
(c) Gattipally Shivpal (d) Nillotpal Khurana
91. Which of the following small finance banks announced a partnership with fintech firm Inddiagold to launch India's first loan against digital gold?
(a) AU Small Finance Bank (b) Utkarsh Small Finance Bank
(c) Shivalik Small Finance Bank (d) Jana Small Finance Bank
92. Recently, India successfully flight tested the indigenously developed new Vertical Launch Short Range _____ from the coast off Balasore, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) official.
(a) Surface-to-Surface Missile (b) Air-to-Air Missile
(c) Surface-to-Air Missile (d) Surface-to-Water Missile
93. Which of the following companies along with Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and Indian Ordnance Factories were among the top 100 global arms-producing and military services companies in 2020?
(a) HAL (b) SAIL
(c) BHEL (d) OIL
94. Who among the following became the inaugural winner of the World Boxing Council's (WBC) India welterweight title?
(a) Sabari J (b) Mithun K (c) Kaustubh L (d) Aniket K

95. In Germany, who is nominated as the country's next Chancellor by Parliament bringing the curtain down on Angela Merkel's 16-year reign?
(a) Olaf Scholz (b) Almund Bistri (c) Peter Mclaf (d) Nathan Kjolf
96. Who among the following clinched the KSLTA ITF World Tour Championships women's singles title, recently?
(a) Pranjala Yadlapalli (b) Sowjanya Bhavisetti
(c) Aishwarya Tirath (d) Manya Muskan
97. Recently, the Swachh Bharat Mission Phase 2 is launched to further strengthen the efforts for a clean India. The report is titled as _____.
(a) "Waste-Wise Cities: Best Practices of Solid Waste Management"
(b) "Waste-Wise Urban Areas: Best Practices in Municipal Solid Waste Management"
(c) "Waste-Wise Cities: Best Practices in Municipal Solid Waste Management"
(d) "Waste-Wise Rural Areas: Best Practices in Municipal Solid Waste Management"
98. Every year, International Civil Aviation Day is celebrated on _____.
(a) 3 December (b) 7 December (c) 9 December (d) 15 December
99. Name the former Chief Election Commissioner of India who joined the Board of Advisors for International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)?
(a) Navin Chawla (b) S Y Quereshi (c) Sunil Arora (d) Ashok Kumar
100. Name the Indian-origin physician who has been selected by NASA along with nine others to be astronauts for future missions.
(a) Hitesh Modi (b) Saumitra Mahajan (c) Anil Menon (d) Deepak Khajuria
101. Recently, Education Ministry has launched a mobile app called _____ in order to help people acquire basic conversation ability in languages other than one's mother tongue to at least 75 lakh people.
(a) Bhasha Sahitya (b) Bhasha Yugma (c) Bhasha Sangam (d) Bhasha Samman
102. Recently, A Curtain Raiser Event for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief exercise _____ for the member nations of BIMSTEC countries, was held at Kothari Auditorium DRDO Bhawan, New Delhi.
(a) PASSEX-21 (b) UNIQUE-21 (c) PANEX-21 (d) ALLIOUT-2021
103. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation three mega projects, including an AIIMS and a major fertiliser plant, in Uttar Pradesh at _____.
(a) Varanasi (b) Gorakhpur (c) Prayagraj (d) Deoria
104. Recently, The researchers at the Indian Institute of Science have found out that _____ gas can suppress the Human Immunodeficiency Virus or HIV virus.
(a) Carbon Monoxide (b) Potassium Sulphate (c) Boron Sulphide (d) Hydrogen Sulphide
105. Recently, National Commission for Women (NCW) launched a pan-India capacity building programme _____.
(a) She is a Changemaker, for women in Engineering
(b) She is a Changemaker, for women in Medicos
(c) She is a Changemaker, for women in Architect
(d) She is a Changemaker, for women in Politics
106. Which of the following fruit and vegetable markets becomes the first market to be certified as the 'clean and fresh fruit and vegetable market' in the national capital by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)?
(a) Delhi's INA (b) Delhi's Khan Market (c) Delhi's Sarita Vihar (d) Delhi's Karol Bagh
107. Who has been recently conferred with 57th Jnanpith Award for the year 2022?
(a) Damodar Mauzo (b) Akhilesh Sahoo (c) Mahant Panda (d) Vipul Deshpande

108. Who won the gold medal in the Men's 55 kg snatch category at the ongoing Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships 2021 in Tashkent?
(a) Sanket Mahadev Sargar (b) Hitesh Modi
(c) Ambuj Khanna (d) Mukesh Gupta
109. Recently, which of the following becomes Indian Railways' first zone to get the first Registered service provider under the newly launched 'Bharat Gaurav Trains' Scheme?
(a) Southern Railway (b) Northern Railway
(c) Western Railway (d) Eastern Railway
110. Name the first Chief of Defence Staff who has died in the air crash recently.
(a) General Yogesh Pawar (b) General Mahesh Jha
(c) General Anuj Khandelkar (d) General Bipin Rawat
111. Which is the first major centrally-driven river interlinking project in the country?
(a) Son-Betwa river linking project (b) Ken-Betwa river linking project
(c) Chambal-Tapi river linking project (d) Son-Gandak river linking project
112. Recently, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman virtually participated in the G20 International Seminar hosted by the G20 Presidency of _____.
(a) France (b) Italy (c) Indonesia (d) Canada
113. Recently, Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman made it to Forbes' 100 most powerful women in the world. This year, she is ranked at number _____.
(a) 21 (b) 26 (c) 34 (d) 37
114. According to a report by Lowy Institute Asia Power Index 2021, India has risen as the _____ most powerful country in Asia.
(a) Second (b) Third (c) Fourth (d) Seventh
115. According to a new report by Reporters Without Borders (RSF), which of the following countries is the world's biggest captor of journalists?
(a) Saudi Arabia (b) China (c) Taiwan (d) UAE
116. Which of the following announced the launch of 'e-Sawaari India Electric Bus Coalition' in partnership with Convergence Energy Service Ltd (CESL) and World Resources Institute, India (WRI India), with support from Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative (TUMI)?
(a) Finance Ministry (b) NITI Aayog (c) PMO (d) NDMA
117. Which of the following banks recently announced partnership with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to launch a new RuPay co-branded credit cards for customers on the indigenously developed payment platform?
(a) HDFC Bank (b) YES Bank (c) ICICI Bank (d) Axis Bank
118. Recently, Scientists have unearthed Asia's first fossil record of mulberry from the Gurha lignite mines in _____.
(a) Gujarat (b) Rajasthan (c) Punjab (d) Haryana
119. Every year, International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime is observed on _____.
(a) 5 December (b) 7 December (c) 9 December (d) 12 December
120. Name the writer who will be awarded the 31st Vyas Samman for his play Mahabali, which was published in 2019.
(a) Asgar Wajahat (b) Nurul Islam
(c) Mithun Kumar (d) Mohammad Yunus

121. Recently, Madhya Pradesh government implemented Police Commissionerate system in which of the following two cities of the state?
(a) Jabalpur and Gwalior (b) Satna and Rewa (c) Bhopal and Indore (d) Gwalior and Khandwa
122. Which of the following became the world's first paperless government?
(a) Dubai (b) Kuwait (c) Qatar (d) San Marino
123. India's ranking in IMD competitive ranking slipped from 59 in 2019 to _____ in 2020.
(a) 60 (b) 62 (c) 65 (d) 69
124. According to the latest World Inequality Report 2022, In India the top 10 per cent holds _____ per cent of the total national income.
(a) 38 (b) 49 (c) 57 (d) 66
125. India International Science Festival (IISF) 2021 was recently organized in:
(a) Panaji (b) Kolkata (c) Mumbai (d) Surat
126. Name the Indian who won a prestigious postdoctoral fellowship on biodiversity to Harvard University recently.
(a) Aditi Rana (b) Sonali Garg (c) Mrinal Saha (d) Nandini Singh
127. Name the mathematician at the Indian Statistical Institute in Kolkata, who has been awarded the 2021 DST-ICTP-IMU Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians from developing countries.
(a) Professor Amita Singh (b) Professor Aparajita Sinha
(c) Professor Amrapali Hitesh (d) Professor Neena Gupta
128. Name the Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher System which was successfully tested at Pokharan range recently.
(a) Teer (b) Pinaka (c) Rambaana (d) Trishul
129. Who won the gold medal in the men's 67 kg category at the Commonwealth Championships, in Tashkent?
(a) Atulya Gupta (b) Jeremy Lalrinnunga (c) Amit Khanna (d) Dileep Rana
130. The International Mountain Day is celebrated on _____ every year.
(a) 4th December (b) 8th December (c) 11th December (d) 12th December
131. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Saryu Nahar National Project at _____.
(a) Basti, Uttar Pradesh (b) Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh
(c) Darbhanga, Bihar (d) Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh
132. Recently, One of the largest planets ever has been detected at an enormous distance around two stars with a combined mass up to _____ greater than our sun.
(a) 5 times (b) 7 times (c) 10 times (d) 15 times
133. Which of the following Payments Banks has gained central bank approval to function as a scheduled payments bank helping it to expand its financial services operations?
(a) Airtel Payments Bank (b) Paytm Payments Bank
(c) Jio Payments Bank (d) Ujjivan Payments Bank
134. Who has been elevated to head of the White House personnel office recently?
(a) Vidyut Sharma (b) Atul Trivedi (c) Gautam Raghavan (d) Aniket Bhattacharya
135. Recently, Olaf Scholz has been sworn in as _____ new chancellor, bringing to an end Angela Merkel's historic 16 years as leader.
(a) France (b) Germany (c) Serbia (d) Bulgaria

136. Recently, Shaktikanta Das started his extended _____ tenure as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor.
(a) two-year (b) three-year (c) four-year (d) five-year
137. International Anti-Corruption Day is celebrated on _____.
(a) 5 December (b) 7 December (c) 9 December (d) 11 December
138. Which of the following international bodies has granted Observer Status to International Solar Alliance recently?
(a) UN General Assembly (b) UNICEF
(c) World Bank (d) IMF
139. Who among the following claimed fifth successive world chess crown, recently?
(a) Victor Kalarov (b) Amunov Kasrpov (c) Dmitri Ukolop (d) Magnus Carlsen
140. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Charter Day is observed every year on _____.
(a) 4th December (b) 6th December (c) 8th December (d) 10th December
141. What is the name of the Indian wetland recently added as Ramsar site?
(a) Haiderpur wetland (b) Keshopur-Miani Community Reserve
(c) Point Calimere Wildlife and Bird Sanctuary (d) Vembanad Kol Wetland
142. Recently, UNSC Secretary-General Antonio Guterres announced the appointment of _____ as the next head of the U.N. children's agency UNICEF.
(a) Rosaline Fredrick (b) Gerty Hiser (c) Alice Thorat (d) Catherine Russell
143. Recently, Reserve Bank of India has approved the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) to raise its stake in IndusInd Bank by up to _____ per cent.
(a) 5.55 (b) 6.66 (c) 8.88 (d) 9.99
144. Companies will have to quote the legal entity identifier (LEI) number so as to undertaking cross-border transactions of Rs 50 crore or more. The LEI is a _____ number used to uniquely identify parties to financial transactions globally to improve the quality and accuracy of financial data systems.
(a) 10-digit (b) 15-digit (c) 20-digit (d) 25-digit
145. Which of the following Indian Institutes has established advanced micro electronics and nano energy facilities at its Centre for Nanotechnology which is the first-of-its-kind in the Northeast?
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati (b) Sikkim Manipal University
(c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), BHU (d) Jadhavpur University
146. The final crewed Gaganyaan mission will be launched in _____.
(a) 2021 (b) 2022 (c) 2023 (d) 2025
147. Who among the following Indian celebrities has been named the number one South Asian celebrity in the world for 2021 by UK-based Eastern Eye weekly newspaper recently?
(a) Mahesh Babu (b) Ayushmaan Khurana (c) Prabhas Raju (d) Ajay Devgan
148. Who among the following won the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix Formula One race?
(a) Max Verstappen (b) Lewis Hamilton (c) Valtteri Bottas (d) Alex Tsipiras
149. Who among the following will receive the Royal Gold Medal 2022 by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), the world's highest honour for architecture?
(a) Balkrishna Doshi (b) Mahesh Gurunani (c) Deepak Kulshrestha (d) Amit Ranjan
150. The Human Rights Day is celebrated on _____ every year since 1950.
(a) 7th December (b) 10th December (c) 12th December (d) 17th December

151. Name the Indian who has been crowned Miss Universe 2021, two decades after Lara Dutta won the title in 2000.
(a) Harleen Singh (b) Anita Dhawan
(c) Pooja Mehendiratta (d) Harnaaz Sandhu
152. Recently, Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Dr. Virendra Kumar launched a National Helpline Against Atrocities in New Delhi. The Helpline is now available round the clock on toll-free number _____ across the country.
(a) 12345 (b) 23232 (c) 14566 (d) 56798
153. Recently, The Geographical Indications Registry (GIR) under the Central ministry of commerce has accepted the plea to rename Bihar Makhana as _____.
(a) Darbhanga Makhana (b) Siwan Makhana
(c) Mithila Makhana (d) Son Makhana
154. Recently, Chairperson, Lokpal of India, Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose inaugurated a digital Platform for Management of Complaints called _____.
(a) 'Lokpal Online' (b) 'Lokpal at Dwar'
(c) 'Lokpal On Demand' (d) 'Lokpal in Space'
155. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the Maa Umiya Dham Development Project in _____.
(a) Haryana (b) Rajasthan (c) Gujarat (d) Uttarakhand
156. Who has been recently named as Time Magazine's Person of The Year?
(a) Elon Musk (b) Angela Merkel (c) Carolina Marin (d) Warren Buffett
157. Recently, New Caledonia rejected independence from _____ in third referendum.
(a) Germany (b) France (c) Sweden (d) Norway
158. Recently, US federal panel has approved renaming a _____ after a Cheyenne woman who facilitated relations between white settlers and Native American tribes in the early 19th century.
(a) Colorado peak (b) Mount Fairweather
(c) Mount Chiginagak (d) Mount Saint Elias
159. Which of the following districts has been ranked first in export of engineering goods in a new listing issued by the Government of India recently?
(a) Pune (b) Solan (c) Udaipur (d) Jabalpur
160. Who among the following recently clinched India's third gold of the Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships by winning the men's 81 kg category?
(a) Deepak Raheja (b) Ajay Singh (c) Vipul Kumar (d) Srikanth Mehta
161. Which of the following countries has been re-elected to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council after elections were held at its Assembly in London for the 2022-23 biennium?
(a) China (b) India (c) Japan (d) South Korea
162. Which of the following became the world first vegetarian friendly train recently?
(a) Shri Ramayana Yatra (b) Buddhist Circuit Yatra
(c) Shri Krishna Yatra (d) Jain Circuit Yatra
163. Recently, The Sports Journalists' Federation of India (SJFI) decided to confer the prestigious 'SJFI Medal' to legendary cricketer _____.
(a) Kapil Dev (b) Sunil Gavaskar (c) Ajit Wadekar (d) Bishan Singh Bedi

164. Recently, The United States, Australia and Japan have said they will jointly fund the construction of an undersea cable to boost internet access in three tiny Pacific countries. Which of the following is not among the three countries?
(a) Nauru (b) Federated States of Micronesia
(c) San Marino (d) Kiribati
165. Which of the following states has announced a new syllabus for classes 1-8 to teach the students about climate change and make them conscious about tackling the issues emanating from it?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Haryana
(c) Himachal Pradesh (d) Maharashtra
166. Name the Indian who has been selected for the 'Global Child Prodigy Award 2022' for excellence in golf.
(a) Neha Lamba (b) Avani Prashanth
(c) Anita Ranjan (d) Hina Khan
167. Recently, Which of the following two hotels have been certified with the US Green Building Council (USGBC)'s LEED Zero Carbon Certification?
(a) Vivanta by Taj in New Delhi and ITC Windsor in Bengaluru
(b) ITC Grand Chola in Chennai and ITC Windsor in Bengaluru
(c) Hotel Leela in New Delhi and Taj Hotel in Jaipur
(d) Hotel Taj in Lucknow and Taj Hotel in Mumbai
168. Who has been recently named as Time's 2021 Athlete of the Year?
(a) Simone Biles (b) Neeraj Chopra (c) Chris Jordan (d) Cristiano Ronaldo
169. National Energy Conservation Day is observed on _____ every year.
(a) December 9 (b) December 12
(c) December 14 (d) December 17
170. Recently, Askot Wildlife Sanctuary in _____ has been finally declared as an Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ).
(a) Uttarakhand's Nainital (b) Uttarakhand's Dehradun
(c) Himachal Pradesh's Manali (d) Uttar Pradesh's Pilibhit
171. Which of the following has just been inscribed on the Intangible Heritage list by UNESCO?
(a) Durga Puja in Kolkata
(b) Ganesha Puja in Mumbai
(c) Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj
(d) Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur
172. Recently, Union Cabinet has approved implementation of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana for 2021-26. The scheme will benefit about _____ farmers.
(a) 19 lakh (b) 22 lakh (c) 25 lakh (d) 29 lakh
173. Recently, Chitkara University, Himachal Pradesh, organised _____ under its Entrepreneurship Cell (E-Cell) 'JAZBA', which has been formed under the aegis of Chitkara University Centre for Entrepreneurship Education & Development (CEED).
(a) "HACKDAY 2021" (b) "UNIDAY 2021"
(c) "SMACKDAY 2021" (d) "TRACKDAY 2021"
174. Which of the following banks has joined hands with National Payments Corporations of India (NPCI) to launch bob World Wave, a wearable line of products for payments, integrated with a complete health ecosystem?
(a) Union Bank of India (b) State Bank of India
(c) Bank of Baroda (d) Punjab National Bank

175. India's first Green Hydrogen Microgrid Projects is to be set up in _____.
(a) Karnataka (b) Kerala (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Maharashtra
176. Which of the following countries recently blocked a United Nations Security Council draft resolution, that for the first time would have defined climate change as a threat to peace?
(a) Japan (b) China (c) Russia (d) South Korea
177. Recently, Researchers at IIT Delhi's Kusuma School of Biological Sciences have developed an RT-PCR based assay for the specific detection of the _____ variant of SARS-CoV-2.
(a) Umicron (B.1.2.325.1) (b) Omicron (B.1.1.725.1)
(c) Omicron (B.1.1.529.1) (d) Desric (N.2.343.6)
178. Recently, Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Thakur launched first edition of Khelo India Women's Hockey League U-21 in _____.
(a) Kolkata (b) New Delhi
(c) Mumbai (d) Bengaluru
179. Which of the following became the first Indian football club to receive a membership of Global Football Alliance (GFA) recently?
(a) Bengaluru FC (b) Mohun Bagan A.C (c) Jamshedpur FC (d) Kerala Blasters FC
180. What is the name of the author of book "The Battle of Belonging: On Nationalism, Patriotism, And What It Means to Be Indian"?
(a) Amish Tripathi (b) Shashi Tharoor (c) Raghuram Rajan (d) Arundhati Roy
181. Recently, the government of India has decided to raise the legal age of marriage for women from 18 to _____ bringing it at par with that of men.
(a) 19 Years (b) 20 Years (c) 21 Years (d) 24 Years
182. Which of the following states launched the Sports Action toward Harnessing Aspiration of Youth (SAHAY) scheme?
(a) Chhattisgarh (b) Haryana (c) Rajasthan (d) Jharkhand
183. The Centre has set up the Price Stabilization Fund to tackle price volatility of agro commodities to protect the interests of consumers. Which of the following is not among the three?
(a) Onion (b) Tomato (c) Potato (d) Pulses
184. In a survey carried out by data analytics company YouGov, who is the most admired men 2021?
(a) Bill Gates (b) Xi Jinping (c) Cristiano Ronaldo (d) Barack Obama
185. Recently, The researchers show that there is no trace of dark matter in the galaxy _____ located about 250 million light-years away.
(a) AGC 114905 (b) BHC 123456
(c) MKJ 987654 (d) ZKL 898988
186. Recently, Vijay Diwas 2021 was observed on:
(a) December 10 (b) December 12 (c) December 14 (d) December 16
187. For the first time in history, a spacecraft has touched the corona of the Sun – an extreme environment that's roughly _____ in a milestone that marks one major step for the spacefaring organisation and one giant leap for mankind and solar science.
(a) 1 million degrees Fahrenheit (b) 2 million degrees Fahrenheit
(c) 4 million degrees Fahrenheit (d) 6 million degrees Fahrenheit

188. Which of the following companies has recently launched its first AI-powered educational platform?
(a) Google Wealth Academy (b) Paytm Wealth Academy
(c) BHIM Wealth Academy (d) PhonePe Wealth Academy
189. Recently who received a knighthood for services to motorsport?
(a) Lewis Hamilton (b) Maxx Verstappen
(c) Valtteri Bottas (d) Michael Schumacher
190. Which of the following motor companies has announced its foray into the non-fungible token (NFT), making it the first carmaker in the country to launch a collection of NFTs?
(a) MG Motor (b) Maruti Suzuki
(c) Hyundai (d) Kia Motors
191. Which of the following states were toppers in the large and small states categories respectively in the 'Index on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy,' released recently?
(a) Karnataka and Goa (b) Uttar Pradesh and Goa
(c) West Bengal and Kerala (d) Madhya Pradesh and Sikkim
192. Recently, The United Nations cultural agency (UNESCO) has added Joumou Soup of _____ to its intangible heritage list.
(a) Haiti (b) Peru
(c) Jamaica (d) Chile
193. Recently, Home First Finance Company India announced that it has entered into a strategic co-lending partnership with _____ for providing home loans to customers at competitive interest rates.
(a) Canara Bank (b) Union Bank of India
(c) Punjab National Bank (d) Bank of Baroda
194. Who has been recently conferred with the highest civilian decoration of Bhutan, Ngadag Pel gi Khorlo?
(a) Narendra Modi (b) Ramnath Kovind
(c) Nitish Kumar (d) Baichung Bhatia
195. Recently, who became the first person to touch all four world's deepest ocean trenches?
(a) Victor Vescovo (b) Alexander Trec
(c) Johnson Destri (d) Alex Ghistry
196. Recently, For the second year in a row which of the following institutions has been selected by the prestigious Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) for the Industrial Innovation Awards?
(a) IIT Delhi (b) IIT Bombay
(c) IIT Roorkee (d) IIT Madras
197. Who won the girls singles event at the 2021 ITTF Hopes and Challenge table tennis tournament in Amman?
(a) Aditi Rao (b) Meenakshi Gupta
(c) Hansini Mathan Rajan (d) Anamika Luthra
198. Who among the following recently received the Global Entrepreneur of the Year Award- Business Transformation from The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) based out of Silicon Valley?
(a) Mukesh Ambani (b) Azim Premji
(c) Kumar Mangalam Birla (d) Naveen Jindal
199. UN Arabic Language Day is observed annually on _____.
(a) December 15 (b) December 17
(c) December 18 (d) December 21

200. Who has been recently awarded the Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice 2021?
(a) Dr Anil Prakash Joshi (b) Dr Atul Rawat
(c) Dr Hitesh Sindhwani (d) Dr Ritesh Jindhwani
201. On the lines of Chhattisgarh and Delhi, preparations are underway to implement the ‘happiness curriculum’ in primary schools of _____ under a pilot project to make the students more sensitive towards nature, society and the country.
(a) Bihar (b) Uttar Pradesh
(c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Jharkhand
202. The North India’s first Centre of Entrepreneurship in Medi Electronics and Health Informatics to start operations in _____.
(a) Varanasi (b) Lucknow (c) Shimla (d) Chandigarh
203. India’s first food museum established by the Food Corporation of India in _____.
(a) Kochi (b) Bhopal (c) Thanjavur (d) Indore
204. Recently, The Union Cabinet approved a _____ scheme to boost semiconductor and display manufacturing in the country, taking the total amount of incentives announced for the electronics sector to ₹2.30 lakh crore.
(a) ₹33,000 crore (b) ₹49,000 crore
(c) ₹65,000 crore (d) ₹76,000 crore
205. Recently, National Cadet Corps, NCC, and National Highways Authority of India, NHAI has signed a Memorandum of Understanding to reuse plastic wastes collected by NCC Cadets during _____ and other Swachhta activities.
(a) Nirmal Sagar Abhiyan (b) Unnati Sagar Abhiyan
(c) Puneet Sagar Abhiyan (d) Rastriya Sagar Abhiyan
206. Which of the following companies is about to become the world’s first \$3 trillion company?
(a) Esson Mobil (b) Microsoft (c) Apple (d) Alibaba
207. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully tested the new generation nuclear-capable ballistic missile _____ from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.
(a) ‘Agni C’ (b) ‘Agni D’ (c) ‘Agni P’ (d) ‘Agni X’
208. Which of the following countries will host Women’s Under-18 and Under-19 SAFF championships next year?
(a) Japan (b) China (c) Bangladesh (d) India
209. Each year, International Migrants Day is celebrated on _____.
(a) 14 December (b) 16 December (c) 18 December (d) 20 December
210. Who is the writer of “The Monk Who Transformed Uttar Pradesh”?
(a) Aditya Singh (b) Shantanu Gupta
(c) Mukesh Jain (d) Mrigank Luthra
211. Recently, India’s first International Arbitration and Mediation Centre (IAMC) was inaugurated in _____.
(a) Lucknow (b) Hyderabad
(c) Ranchi (d) Bengaluru
212. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the longest expressway of Uttar Pradesh Ganga Expressway in _____.
(a) Meerut district (b) Pilibhit district
(c) Shahjahanpur district (d) Ghaziabad district

213. Which of the following state governments launched the Safe and Responsible Migration Initiative (SRMI) to enable systemic registration of migrant workers for monitoring and analysis in the source as well as the destination districts recently?
(a) Chhattisgarh (b) Jharkhand (c) Odisha (d) Madhya Pradesh
214. Which of the following state governments recently announced the state anthem and directed that all present during its rendition should remain standing?
(a) Goa (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Sikkim
215. According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, which of the following billionaires remains the world's wealthiest person?
(a) Jeff Bezos (b) Sergey Brin (c) Elon Musk (d) Bernard Arnault
216. Which of the following dates was declared as the Minorities Rights Day back in 1992 by the United Nations?
(a) December 14 (b) December 16 (c) December 18 (d) December 20
217. Recently, Researchers at _____ has developed a class of fast and efficient "motion planning" algorithms which can think like human beings and enable autonomous aerial, ground or surface vehicles to navigate obstacle-cluttered environments?
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi
(b) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati
(c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay
(d) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras
218. Which of the following countries will host Women's Under-18 and Under-19 SAFF championships next year?
(a) South Korea (b) India (c) Australia (d) New Zealand
219. In Badminton, who among the following bagged a historic silver medal in the Men's singles final of BWF World Championships at Huelva in Spain?
(a) Kidambi Srikanth (b) P Kashyap (c) Lakshya sen (d) Amit Mishra
220. Name the Former Supreme Court judge who investigated the 1984 anti-Sikh and the 2002 Godhra riots who passed away.
(a) Justice Harish Trivedi (b) Justice Girish Thakorlal Nanavati
(c) Justice Anupam Mahara (d) Justice Anuj Lakhers
221. Recently, Gabriel Boric has been elected as the new President of _____.
(a) Peru (b) Chile (c) Argentina (d) Brazil
222. After the abrogation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status in 2019, the government set up the Delimitation Commission headed by retired Supreme Court judge _____.
(a) Ranjana Prakash Desai (b) Gyan Sudha Mishra
(c) Ajay Kumar Mishra (d) J Chamaleshwar
223. Recently, The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) sets up a committee for creating a framework for transfer of stressed loans from domestic lenders to financial institutions in IFSC. Who will chair this committee?
(a) Anuj Kumar Jain (b) S Sudhakar Reddy
(c) A Murugan (d) G Padmanabhan
224. The 2021 RSF World Press Freedom Index ranks India at _____ rank.
(a) 111 (b) 127 (c) 134 (d) 142

225. Recently, The Centre introduced the Election Laws (Amendment Bill) 2021 to link _____ and Aadhaar card, despite objections by the Opposition parties over the move.
(a) Ration Cards (b) Voter Identity Card
(c) Pan Card (d) Driving License
226. The government of India has launched a campaign namely _____ to increase awareness regarding protection and exploitation of Intellectual Property (IP).
(a) KAPILA (b) SAMPLA (c) JITHILA (d) PRATHAM
227. Who has been recently appointed the brand ambassador of Uttarakhand with an aim to promote sports and create mental health awareness among the state's youth?
(a) Rahul Dravid (b) Rishabh Pant (c) Unmukt Chand (d) Jay Bista
228. Who has been recently chosen to be the new chancellor of Austria?
(a) Sebastian Kurz (b) Werner Kogler (c) Karl Nehammer (d) Alexander Van der Bellen
229. Who among the following Indian shuttler was appointed as a member of the Badminton World Federation's (BWF) Athletes' Commission recently?
(a) Saina Nehwal (b) Kidambi Srikanth (c) Lakshya Sen (d) PV Sindhu
230. International Human Solidarity Day is celebrated every year on _____.
(a) 18 December (b) 20 December (c) 22 December (d) 24 December
231. Recently, NITI Aayog has entered into an agreement with United Nations World Food Program (WFP) to address issues related to inclusion of _____ in government programmes.
(a) Millets (b) Bajra (c) Pulses (d) Rice
232. NASA and ISRO are jointly developing space-borne synthetic aperture radar (NISAR), to be launched in _____.
(a) 2022 (b) 2023 (c) 2025 (d) 2027
233. Which of the following countries is home to world's first small modular nuclear reactor?
(a) Japan (b) India (c) China (d) Malaysia
234. PANEX-21, a Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise for _____ member nations has been organised at College of Military Engineering in Pune, Maharashtra.
(a) SAARC (b) ASEAN (c) BIMSTEC (d) G-20
235. In India, the Indian government declared National Mathematics Day on _____.
(a) 17 December (b) 20 December
(c) 22 December (d) 24 December
236. Recently, Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), _____ and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) rolled out their first AgriTech Challenge cohort for its ambitious innovative Agri-tech program.
(a) Ministry of Corporate Affairs (b) NITI Aayog
(c) NABARD (d) SIDBI
237. Recently, The planned World Economic Forum in _____ has been called off due to surging cases of the Omicron variant of Covid-19, citing communication from organisers to delegates.
(a) Munich (b) Davos (c) Madrid (d) Lisbon
238. Who has recently assumed charge of National Film Development Corporation (NFDC), Films Division, and Children Films Society of India (CFSI)?
(a) Deepak Madaan (b) Achyut Ranjan (c) Ravinder Bhakar (d) Mahesh Jain

239. Recently, U.S. President Joe Biden announced intent to appoint four Indian Americans as members of his Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islander. Who is not among the four?
(a) Ajay Jain Bhutoria (b) Anubhav Rakheja
(c) Kamal Kalsi (d) Sonal Shah
240. Who won the National Billiards Title recently?
(a) Pankaj Advani (b) Dhruv Sitwala (c) Aditya Mahtab (d) Dheeraj Kumar
241. Recently, Odisha's Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated _____ the State's longest bridge over Mahanadi in Cuttack district.
(a) V-Setu (b) B-Setu, (c) P-Setu (d) T-Setu
242. Recently, who among the following has released the book titled 'Spices Statistics at a Glance 2021'?
(a) Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar
(b) Prime Minister Narendra Modi
(c) Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman
(d) Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav
243. Recently, Researchers at the _____ have developed hybrid pervskite solar or photovoltaic devices to produce electricity from sunlight, which are highly efficient, cost effective, easy to manufacture and easily recyclable.
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati
(b) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi
(c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras
(d) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay
244. The first tea museum in the northeast region will come up in _____ and will be officially opened to public in early 2023.
(a) Guwahati (b) Gangtok (c) Kolkata (d) Dibrugarh
245. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of 'Banas Dairy Sankul' at Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority Food Park in _____.
(a) Prayagraj (b) Varanasi (c) Kanpur (d) Noida
246. In India, National Farmers' Day is celebrated on _____.
(a) December 19 (b) December 21 (c) December 23 (d) December 25
247. Recently, Britain and _____ have signed their first post-Brexit fishing deal, allowing each country access to the other's waters and reciprocal quotas?
(a) Finland (b) Sweden (c) Norway (d) Iceland
248. Which of the following banks recently announced that it has won the number one position in overall digital transactions among large banks for FY20-21?
(a) Punjab National Bank (b) Union Bank of India (c) Bank of Baroda (d) State Bank of India
249. Which of the following companies recently announced that it is auctioning the world's first SMS as a non-fungible token (NFT)?
(a) Vodafone (b) Reliance Jio (c) Airtel (d) BSNL
250. Which of the following teams has lifted SAFF U-19 Women's Championship recently?
(a) India (b) Japan (c) Bangladesh (d) Maldives
251. Recently, Indian Army launched a contemporary messaging application named _____.
(a) MAGMA (b) KISNA (c) ASIGMA (d) STIGMA

252. Recently, India successfully test fired short-range, surface to surface-guided ballistic missile _____ off the Odisha coast.
(a) Ajeya (b) Pralay (c) Unique (d) Input
253. Recently, Atal Innovation Mission, Niti Aayog launched the first of its kind Vernacular Innovation Program which enables innovators and entrepreneurs to have access to the innovative ecosystem in _____ mother tongue languages.
(a) 13 (b) 17 (c) 20 (d) 22
254. Recently, Rakesh Jhunjhunwala-backed Akasa Air unveiled its brand logo. The logo of the new budget carrier is _____.
(a) A (b) AK (c) RJ (d) akasha
255. What will be the symbol for the first ever 'Kerala Olympic Games', slated to be held in February 2022?
(a) Rabbit mascot named Neeraj (b) Deer mascot named Raja
(c) Bear mascot named Knotty (d) Lion mascot named Sheru
256. Recently, The Government of India notified the semiconductor policy which was cleared by the Cabinet. The government will provide up to _____ of Project cost for two semiconductor and two display fabs in the country.
(a) 20% (b) 30% (c) 40% (d) 50%
257. Name the Indian woman cricketer who sets to storm the exciting new world of non-fungible token (NFT) with the Dubai based CricFlix with RevSportz and Fanatic Sports, launching its first-ever cricket non-fungible token (NFT)?
(a) Mithali Raj (b) Harmanpreet Kaur (c) Smriti Mandhana (d) Jhulan Goswami
258. Every Year, National Consumer Rights Day is observed on _____ with a particular theme across the country.
(a) 18 December (b) 20 December (c) 22 December (d) 24 December
259. Name the Indian American who has become the first person of South Asian descent to be selected as a federal judge in Michigan.
(a) Meenakshi J Luthra (b) Shalina D Kumar (c) Aditi N Ranjan (d) Kritika L Desai
260. Who won the UN Women's Award for Leadership Commitment at the 2021 Regional Asia-Pacific Women's Empowerment Principles Awards ceremony?
(a) Anupama Singh (b) Manorama Sharma (c) Divya Hegde (d) Rashmi Devgowda
261. Which of the following state Assemblies unanimously cleared the Shakti Criminal Laws Bill, 2020 on crimes against women and children?
(a) Gujarat (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Maharashtra
262. India's first 5G technology trials for rural broadband began at Ajol village, with a base transceiver station (BTS) installed in _____ district.
(a) Satara (b) Nagpur (c) Gandhinagar (d) Kolkata
263. Which of the following companies has become the latest entity to join the green hydrogen rush by initiating the process of setting up a 100 kw green hydrogen plant?
(a) HPCL (b) Oil India Ltd (c) BPCL (d) IOCL
264. Which of the following state assemblies gave its nod to Pandit Raghunath Murmu Tribal University Bill 2021, paving the way for the state's first tribal university?
(a) Uttarakhand (b) Jharkhand (c) Odisha (d) West Bengal
265. Which of the following countries approves plan to double settlers in occupied Golan Heights?
(a) Israel (b) Jordan (c) Syria (d) Iraq

266. Vishwavir Ahuja stepped down as the MD and CEO of _____.
(a) RBL Bank (b) IDFC First (c) Bandhan Bank (d) ICICI Bank
267. Recently, BrahMos manufacturing centre to be established by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in _____.
(a) Lucknow (b) Varanasi (c) Kanpur (d) Indore
268. Which of the following state/ union territories will publish its first 'State of Environment Report' next year that will have data on all key areas, including sewage, water quality, waste collection and segregation etc., put together succinctly?
(a) Puducherry (b) Lakshadweep (c) Delhi (d) Sikkim
269. Who won the Bronze medal at the FIS Alpine Skiing Competition in Montenegro?
(a) Aanchal Thakur (b) Anita Gupta
(c) Abhilasha Jha (d) Sukirti Kandpal
270. Recently, Karolos Papoulias, who served as president at the height of the economic crisis of the 2010s, died. He was the President of _____.
(a) Poland (b) Portugal (c) Ireland (d) Greece
271. The CoE on Water Reuse is the first of its kind to be established in the country through a collaboration between NMCG and _____.
(a) Namami Gange
(b) TERI
(c) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(d) NITI Aayog
272. Recently, Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra said the polling time will be enhanced by an hour for assembly elections in _____ considering the state's difficult terrain.
(a) Uttarakhand (b) Himachal Pradesh (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Sikkim
273. Who among the following became first Indian to be awarded 'Symbol Of The Armour' by Israel's Army?
(a) Madhuri Dixit Nene (b) Urvashi Rautela (c) Amitabh Bachchan (d) Sushmita Sen
274. Recently, The world's largest and most powerful space telescope 'James Webb Space Telescope' rocketed away on a high-stakes quest to behold light from the first stars and galaxies and scour the universe for hints of life. It is developed by _____.
(a) CERN (b) JAXA (c) NASA (d) CERN
275. Name the African nation which has registered its first protected geographical indication "sugarloaf pineapple" from the Allada Plateau.
(a) The Gambia (b) Benin (c) Algeria (d) Liberia
276. Name the first of the indigenously built missile corvettes, which was decommissioned "after 32 years of glorious service".
(a) INS Khukri (b) INS Vikrant (c) INS Kushal (d) INS Vikramiditya
277. Which of the following has successfully conducted the flight test of Indigenously developed High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) 'Abhyas'?
(a) ISRO (b) BARC (c) DRDO (d) HAL
278. Which of the following states won the 11th Hockey India junior National men's championship recently?
(a) Jharkhand (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Odisha (d) Chhattisgarh

279. Recently, Anti-apartheid icon Archbishop Desmond Tutu died aged 90. He belonged to _____.
(a) Spain (b) Portugal (c) South Africa (d) Zimbabwe
280. Which of the following states has delivered India's first great superhero movie "Minnal Murali"?
(a) Karnataka (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Kerala (d) Andhra Pradesh
281. The ministry of home affairs set up a high-level committee, headed by _____ to look into the possibility of withdrawing the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act from Nagaland.
(a) Mukesh Jain (b) Vivek Joshi (c) Tanmay Jha (d) Uday Kumar
282. Recently, Nitin Gadkari launched the first Intelligent Transport System on Eastern Peripheral Expressway in _____.
(a) Ghaziabad (b) Noida (c) Meerut (d) Shimla
283. Which of the following states has recently topped the composite ranking in the Good Governance Index (GGI)?
(a) Kerala (b) Maharashtra (c) Odisha (d) Gujarat
284. Recently, Minister of Agriculture, Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurated the four-day agriculture exhibition 'Agrovision', in _____.
(a) Jaipur, Rajasthan (b) Nagpur, Maharashtra
(c) Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh (d) Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh
285. Name the Indian origin person who has been appointed to South Africa's highest judicial bench, the Constitutional Court.
(a) Amit "Gopi" Mendiratta (b) Narandran 'Jody' Kollapen
(c) Gistro "Mibto" Luter (d) Chetan "Jolly" Karamdas
286. Which of the following has become the first country to make coronavirus vaccines obligatory for children?
(a) Kenya (b) Ecuador (c) Eritrea (d) Madagascar
287. According to British consultancy CEBR which of the following countries will become the world's top economy in dollar terms in 2030?
(a) Japan (b) USA (c) China (d) Russia
288. Which of the following teams won Vijay Hazare Trophy at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium recently?
(a) Tamil Nadu (b) Maharashtra (c) Himachal Pradesh (d) Uttar Pradesh
289. Recently, In a revelation that could redefine certain aspects of anatomical studies, scientists have now discovered that humans have a new layer of muscles behind the _____.
(a) Cheeks (b) Brain (c) Eyes (d) Liver
290. National Consumer Day is observed on _____ annually to highlight the importance of the consumer movement and spread awareness about the rights and responsibilities of every consumer.
(a) 16 December (b) 19 December
(c) 21 December (d) 24 December
291. According to the fourth Health Index launched by NITI Aayog, which of the following states has emerged as the top performer in terms of overall health performance among larger States?
(a) Maharashtra (b) Kerala (c) Karnataka (d) Madhya Pradesh
292. Who has been appointed deputy national security adviser in the national Security Council secretariat?
(a) Vikram Misri (b) Ajay Bapat (c) Mukesh Kumar (d) Avinash Sharan

293. Which of the following countries President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed had suspended the Prime Minister's powers, escalating a destabilising dispute recently?
(a) Eritrea (b) Somalia (c) Djibouti (d) Liberia
294. The 'India Out' campaign is quiet visible in news. India Out' campaign is cropped up in _____.
(a) Maldives (b) Mauritius (c) Seychelles (d) Sri Lanka
295. The Fifth Generation or 5G telecom services are set to be rolled out in selected cities in India in 2022. Which of the following is not among the selected cities?
(a) Lucknow (b) Jamnagar (c) Pune (d) Varanasi
296. Which of the following banks has joined hands with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) for offering real-time cross-border remittances to India using UPI IDs for its Money Transfer Operator (MTO) partners recently?
(a) Bandhan Bank (b) IDFC First Bank (c) IndusInd Bank (d) Axis Bank
297. The National Energy Conservation Day is observed on _____ every year by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE).
(a) December 11th (b) December 14th (c) December 18th (d) December 24th
298. Which of the following teams lifted the trophy in the Hero Asian Champions trophy hockey in Dhaka recently?
(a) Korea (b) Japan (c) Malaysia (d) India
299. Which of the following country's scientists have claimed that they have developed a machine that can charge people with crime using artificial intelligence?
(a) Russia (b) USA (c) China (d) Japan
300. Who is the only Indian to undergo International Air and Space Program (IASP) at NASA Launch Operations' Kennedy Space Centre in Alabama, US?
(a) Aditi Kashyap (b) Meenakshi Kulshrestha
(c) Jahnvi Dangeti (d) Supriya Ratnakar
301. Which of the following state governments has credited farmer welfare schemes for the state's No. 1 rank in agriculture and allied sectors in the Good Governance Index 2021?
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Telangana (d) Andhra Pradesh
302. Recently, Narendra Modi inaugurated the Bina-Panki Multiproduct Pipeline Project in _____.
(a) Varanasi (b) Kanpur (c) Lucknow (d) Meerut
303. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation of the Rs 6,700-crore Renukaji Dam project in _____.
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Uttarakhand (c) Himachal Pradesh (d) Arunachal Pradesh
304. Which of the following Asian countries will chair the Counter-Terrorism Committee of UNSC in January 2022?
(a) Bangladesh (b) South Korea (c) India (d) Japan
305. Which of the following states / union territory government introduced colour-coded action plan to fight Covid-19 recently?
(a) Puducherry (b) Delhi (c) Sikkim (d) Goa
306. Which of the following industrial groups has become the first major Indian multinational conglomerate to roll out an electric vehicle (EV) policy for its employees?
(a) JSW Group (b) Essar Group (c) Reliance Group (d) Adani Group
307. Which of the following countries has launched Inmarsat-6 F1 satellite?
(a) South Korea (b) Japan (c) China (d) Maldives

308. Who has been awarded the prestigious Global Environment and Climate Action Citizen Award in Dubai recently?
(a) Mrunal Shah (b) Viral Desai (c) Duleep Bansal (d) Amit Virani
309. The World Sangeet Tansen festival is held in _____.
(a) Gwalior (b) Indore (c) Bokaro (d) Jhansi
310. Who became the first-ever woman to get promoted to the rank of Inspector General in Assam Police?
(a) Anita Sen (b) Mrinalini Saha (c) Violet Baruah (d) Anamika Sengupta
311. According to Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA), which of the following central institutions topped in promotion and support of innovation and entrepreneurship development?
(a) IIT Kanpur (b) IIT Delhi (c) IIT Bombay (d) IIT Madras
312. Which of the following places is to get India's first mobile haemophilia service unit?
(a) Davangere (b) Tawang (c) Jabalpur (d) Udaipur
31. Recently, The Army, with support from the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) has recently established the Quantum Lab at Military College of Telecommunication Engineering _____ to spearhead research and training in this key developing field.
(a) Vijaywada in Andhra Pradesh (b) Gulbarga in Karnataka
(c) Mhow in Madhya Pradesh (d) Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh
314. Recently, The world's first dual-mode vehicle, equally at home on road and rail, is set to make its public debut in _____.
(a) China (b) South Korea (c) Indonesia (d) Japan
315. Which of the following banks has announced the launch of 'green fixed deposits', whereby the deposit proceeds will be used to finance projects and firms supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?
(a) IndusInd Bank (b) IDFC First Bank (c) Axis Bank (d) ICICI Bank
316. The Corporate houses, which are not allowed to own a bank, can now pick up _____ stake in commercial banks through their non-banking financial companies (NBFCs).
(a) 10 per cent (b) 15 per cent (c) 20 per cent (d) 25 per cent
317. Which of the following countries recently became the fourth new member of BRICS New Development Bank?
(a) Pakistan (b) Egypt (c) Peru (d) Chile
318. Which of the following states has become first state to get own genome sequencing lab?
(a) Kerala (b) Maharashtra (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Gujarat
319. Which of the following Indian cities to get North India's first National Centre for Disease Control branch?
(a) Chandigarh (b) Ambala (c) Shimla (d) Jammu
320. Who is the fifth Indian pacer to take 200 Test wickets recently?
(a) Ishant Sharma (b) Bhuvaneshwar Kumar
(c) Jasprit Bumrah (d) Mohammed Shami
321. Uttar Pradesh's first data centre park is all set to come up in the _____.
(a) Greater Noida region (b) Gorakhpur region (c) Meerut region (d) Varanasi region
322. Who has been appointed as India's next permanent representative to the UN Conference on Disarmament in Geneva?
(a) Amit Mathur (b) Deepak Raheja (c) Anupam Ray (d) Suresh Jha

323. Recently, The Centre has notified rules for Consumer Protection (Jurisdiction of the District Commission, the State Commission and the National Commission) Rules, 2021. The revised pecuniary jurisdiction for entertaining consumer complaints shall be upto _____ for District Commissions.
(a) 20 lakh rupees (b) 30 lakh rupees (c) 50 lakh rupees (d) 75 lakh rupees
324. Recently, Uttar Pradesh got its first water sports complex in _____.
(a) Lucknow (b) Gorakhpur (c) Meerut (d) Varanasi
325. In January 2022, which of the following countries is set to host the largest international contemporary art event, the World Art Forum (WAF)?
(a) Portugal (b) Egypt (c) Malaysia (d) Spain
326. Which of the following banks will acquire about 10 per cent stake in the India International Clearing Corporation (IICC)?
(a) Union Bank of India (b) Punjab National Bank (c) Union Bank of India (d) State Bank of India
327. Which of the following banks is set to embrace new recommended interest rate benchmarks necessitated as the traditional rate gauge London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR) will cease to exist for its day-to-day businesses and in product pricing?
(a) Union Bank of India (b) Punjab National Bank (c) Union Bank of India (d) State Bank of India
328. Who is the first Indian to qualify for two events at the Winter Olympics?
(a) Hassan Mohammad (b) Arif Mohammed Khan
(c) Mukesh Meshram (d) Jagdeeshan Ishwaran
329. Who is not among the 20 names announced for the Sahitya Akademi Award 2021?
(a) Namita Gokhale (b) Mahesh Kumar (c) Bratya Basu (d) Khalid Hussain
330. Which of the following gulf countries recently issued its first civil marriage license for a non-Muslim couple?
(a) UAE (b) Bahrain (c) Saudi Arabia (d) Kuwait
331. Which is the first state amongst small states to launch the online RTI portal of the department of administrative reforms?
(a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Goa (c) Sikkim (d) Haryana
332. Which of the following has organized a day-long national-level workshop on bamboo development in New Delhi?
(a) Ministry of Finance (b) NITI Aayog (c) PMO (d) Ministry of Tribal Affairs
333. Which of the following states released draft Active Mobility Bill which looks into the protection of the rights of pedestrians and cyclists in urban centres all over the state?
(a) Kerala (b) Karnataka (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Maharashtra
334. Which of the following places opens two new lines on longest metro in world recently?
(a) Shanghai (b) Tokyo (c) Beijing (d) Milan
335. The Centre has told the Supreme Court that it has decided to accept the recommendation of a three-member panel to retain the current gross annual family income limit for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) of _____ or less.
(a) Rs 4 lakh (b) Rs 6 lakh (c) Rs 8 lakh (d) Rs 10 lakh
336. Which of the following has become the world's first paperless government recently?
(a) Dubai (b) San Marino (c) Fiji (d) Cuba
337. According to the latest study has revealed the findings of an earlier study report that the area of glaciers in Nepal decreased by about _____ from 1977 to 2010
(a) 14 percent (b) 18 percent (c) 24 percent (d) 30 percent

338. The Centre notified monetary jurisdiction of consumer commissions, with the district commissions having jurisdiction to entertain complaints where value of goods or services paid as consideration does not exceed _____.
(a) Rs 20 lakh (b) Rs 30 lakh (c) Rs 40 lakh (d) Rs 50 lakh
339. Global Family Day, One Day of Peace and Sharing, is celebrated every _____ in the United States as a global day of peace and sharing.
(a) January 1 (b) January 3 (c) January 5 (d) January 7
340. Who among the following became Singapore's first badminton world champion recently?
(a) Loh Kean Yew (b) Jofn Won (c) Lee Chen Kee (d) Mew Der Chang
341. Who is the newly appointed Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Railway Board?
(a) Amit Mohan Garg (b) Vineet Kumar Singh
(c) Vinay Kumar Tripathi (d) Rajaram Luthra
342. Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched 100-day Reading Campaign _____.
(a) 'Padho Bharat' (b) 'Padhai Karta Bharat'
(c) 'Padhe Bharat' (d) 'Padhengey tabhi to badhega Bharat'
343. Recently, The U.S. has appointed two women diplomats to senior posts representing Washington in Afghanistan. _____ has been appointed as a special envoy for Afghan women, girls, and human rights.
(a) Hina Khan (b) Rina Amiri (c) Mahek Grewal (d) Deepanita Ghosh
344. The parliamentary panel assigned to examine the landmark bill which seeks to raise the legal age of marriage for women to 21 has only one woman MP out of 31 members. Name the woman MP.
(a) Sushmita Dev (b) Mohua Mitra (c) Navneet Rana (d) Nusrat Jahan
345. Which of the following European countries has shut down three of its six nuclear power plants, as part of the country's phase-out of nuclear energy and turned its focus to renewable?
(a) Germany (b) France (c) Italy (d) Portugal
346. Recently, the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India has set up 'LIC Digi Zone' in _____ to enhance its digital operations such as sales and services for its customers.
(a) New Delhi (b) Mumbai (c) Kolkata (d) Chennai
347. Every year, World Braille Day is celebrated on _____.
(a) 2nd January (b) 4th January (c) 6th January (d) 10th January
348. Recently, _____ is stepping up the game to amaze new travelers on a wider scale by becoming the first global virtual NFT platform based on a real-world map.
(a) 'Metaverse Dubai' (b) 'Metaverse Milan'
(c) 'Metaverse New York' (d) 'Metaverse Al Salvador'
349. Mandatory martial arts training for school and college girls, 50 more person-days for all single- and women-headed households under MGNREGS and 33.3% representation in registered parties are among the provisions in the draft _____ State New Policy for Women 2021.
(a) Kerala (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Telanagana (d) Andhra Pradesh
350. Recently, Researchers have identified the first signature of a magnetic field surrounding a planet outside of our solar system. The team used Hubble to observe the exoplanet _____ a Neptune-sized planet 123 light-years from Earth, pass directly across the face of its host star six times in what is known as a "transit."
(a) HAT-P-11b (b) NAT-P-11v (c) LAT-P-15y (d) KAT-O-23r

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. c Varanasi has become the first Indian city to start ropeway service as a mode of public transport.
2. b Japan gets world's first operational dual-mode bus and rail vehicle.
3. d Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat launched River Cities Alliance and National Urban River Management Plan for Kanpur in New Delhi.
4. a Romanian President Klaus Iohannis has nominated Defence Minister Nicolae Ciuca to form a new government as Prime Minister.
5. a World's first floating City to Set Sail in South Korea by 2025.
6. c Mumbai-based automotive-to-technology major Mahindra & Mahindra has entered the World Index list of companies in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI) 2021.
7. c External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar said that India has been elected to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee for 2021-25.
8. d Paramjeet Kumar became the first power lifter from India to clinch a medal in the World Para Powerlifting Championships.
9. b Shreyas Iyer became the first Indian to score a century and a half-century on Test debut.
10. c Noted mountaineer from Uttarakhand Harshwanti Bisht has earned the distinction of being elected the first woman president of the Indian Mountaineering Foundation (IMF).
11. b Ratan Nag project in Kishtwar district of J&K with 10.50 MW at an estimated cost of over 315 crore rupees has irrigation benefits as well.
12. b Hyderabad-based startup Skyroot Aerospace has successfully demonstrated the country's first privately developed cryogenic rocket engine named Dhawan-1 after eminent rocket scientist Satish Dhawan.
13. b Indian tennis player Ramkumar Ramanathan won his maiden Challenger level singles title after 12 years turning a Pro.
14. b Twitter co-founder Jack Dorsey will step down as CEO of the social media platform, the company announced. He will be succeeded by Twitter's current Chief Technology Officer Parag Agrawal.
15. c Japanese director Masakazu Kaneko's "Ring Wandering", about an aspiring manga artist, won the top honour at the closing ceremony of the 52nd edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI).
16. c Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) has received approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to increase its stake in the Kotak Mahindra Bank. The approval is to raise LIC's stake in the bank up to 9.99 per cent from the current 4.96 per cent it has in the private lender.
17. b Bollywood actress-turned-politician, Smriti Zubin Irani has turned author with her debut novel 'Lal Salaam'.
18. a A transgender person Nazrul Islam Ritu has been elected as the Chairperson of the Union Parishad of Trilochanpur Union of Kaliganj in Jhenaidha district of Bangladesh. Ritu is the first transgender to be elected as Chairperson in the Union Parishad elections of Bangladesh.
19. b The Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, at its 20th Session, decided that a memorial Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare would be observed on 30 November each year or, when appropriate, on the first day of the regular session of the Conference.
20. a At midnight, the Caribbean island Barbados has become the world's newest republic and in doing so removes the Queen as its head of state.

- 21. b** IDFC FIRST Bank announced the launch of FIRST Private Infinite, the country's first-ever standalone metal debit card, in partnership with Visa, the global leader in digital payments.
- 22. b** Nagaland DGP T. John Longkumer officially launched the 'Call your Cop' mobile App at Police Headquarters in Kohima.
- 23. c** The national Total Fertility Rate was found to be 2.2 in the NFHS 2015-16 survey, down from 2.7 in the NFHS 2005-06 survey.
- 24. d** Now operational with more than 200 entities which have set up their offices where more than 12,000 people are working, the Gujarat International Finance Tec City (GIFT City) is India's first and only International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) where banks, stock exchanges and financial services firms have set up their global operations.
- 25. c** Popular Argentine striker Lionel Messi won the 2021 Ballon d'Or, adding the seventh golden ball to his account.
- 26. c** Tel Aviv is now the world's most expensive city to live in, according to a survey published.
- 27. c** Every year, on 1 December, the world commemorates World AIDS Day.
- 28. d** Admiral R Hari Kumar took charge as the new chief of the Indian Navy, replacing Admiral Karambir Singh who superannuated after serving over 41 years.
- 29. b** Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions Dr. Jitendra Singh launched unique Face Recognition Technology for Pensioners in New Delhi.
- 30. b** Shillong's famous Cherry Blossom Festival is back this year after being cancelled due to COVID outbreak last year.
- 31. b** Indian Railways is constructing the world's tallest railway bridge pier at Noney Valley in the state of Manipur with a height of 141 metres.
- 32. a** The Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO) has been ranked 'number one Cooperative' among the top 300 cooperatives in the world, withholding its position from last year.
- 33. c** The Centre has formed a three-member committee to review the ₹8 lakh annual income limit to identify economically weaker section (EWS) for providing 10% quota in public jobs and educational institutions, the social justice and empowerment ministry said in an official memorandum.
- 34. b** Bangladesh Navy (BN) and the US military personnel kicked off the annual Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) maritime exercise.
- 35. c** India-based businesses are gearing up for their first Middle East edition of India Global Forum Dubai.
- 36. b** Arunachal Pradesh became the first state in the country to obtain an organic certification for its kiwis.
- 37. d** Indian tech wizard Parag Agrawal takes over as CEO of the social media platform Twitter following the departure of its co-founder CEO.
- 38. c** Indonesia, South Africa and the U.K. are partner countries in the first edition of the Forum.
- 39. c** Russia had carried out another successful test of its Zircon hypersonic cruise missile, as world powers race to develop the advanced weaponry.
- 40. a** NITI Aayog released the report Designing the Future of Dispute Resolution: the ODR Policy Plan for India, to scale dispute avoidance, containment, and resolution online.
- 41. c** Two COVID-19 cases of the Omicron variant have been detected in India, making it the 30th country in the world to report the coronavirus strain that has triggered global alarm. Both the cases have been reported in Karnataka with the patients being two men aged 66 and 46.
- 42. a** The Centre has said the Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi has been adjudged the 'Best Airport in India and Central Asia' this year by Skytrax.

- 43. d** Vietnam's PM Pham Minh Chin's recent visit to Japan to strengthen strategic partnership aimed at creating peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region amid China's hegemonistic designs has opened up the creation of a prospective trilateral – Japan-India-Vietnam which can be termed as JIV.
- 44. a** South Sudan's Government has promised to end child marriage by 2030 in line with the African Union's campaign to end child marriages in the continent.
- 45. c** Nifty Bharat Bond Index – April 2022- has been launched within the Nifty Bharat Bond index series.
- 46. b** Uber launched ride-booking via WhatsApp in India. It is being rolled out on a pilot basis in Lucknow first, and will be expanded to other Indian cities soon.
- 47. d** Banking on their two significant inventions - papermaking and printing - the Chinese developed, arguably, the world's first currency in the 7th century during the time of the Tang dynasty.
- 48. c** Astronomers have found a giant, hot exoplanet that orbits around its star once every 16 hours.
- 49. b** The former international long jump star Anju Bobby George has been awarded the Woman of the Year Award by World Athletics (WA) for grooming talent in the country and advocating gender equality.
- 50. b** A biography of Dadabhai Naoroji, one of the founders of the Indian National Congress, by Dinyar Patel was named winner of the Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay NIF Book Prize 2021.
- 51. b** India has joined the G20 Troika. Apart from India, Troika consists of Indonesia and Italy.
- 52. b** India and European Union (EU) have agreed to step up their Clean Energy and Climate Partnership. They jointly agreed on a detailed work programme until 2023 to implement the 2016 India-EU Clean Energy and Climate Partnership.
- 53. b** State Bank of India (SBI) listed its \$650-million green bonds simultaneously on the India International Exchange (India INX) and the Luxembourg Stock Exchange.
- 54. b** Gujarat has pipped Maharashtra to emerge the largest manufacturing hub in the country, with the former's Gross Value Addition (GVA) in manufacturing growing 15.9 per cent annually on average between FY12 and FY20 to touch Rs 5.11 lakh crore, according to the data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- 55. b** Chief economist Gita Gopinath will become the number two official at the Washington-based crisis lender IMF next month. The India-born economist will succeed Geoffrey Okamoto as first deputy managing director, serving under IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva.
- 56. c** Kotak Mahindra Mutual Fund has launched India's first ever Nifty Alpha 50 ETF called the Kotak Nifty Alpha 50 ETF.
- 57. b** Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar launched the first indigenous server, Rudra, developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) under the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM).
- 58. b** Olympic champion Viktor Axelsen and Tokyo Games silver medallist Tai Tzu Ying were named the BWF Male and Female Player of the Year respectively in recognition of their stellar runs this season.
- 59. b** Nizamuddin Basti conservation project gets two UNESCO Awards.
- 60. b** Eminent Indian-American mathematician Nikhil Srivastava, who teaches at the University of California, Berkeley, has been jointly selected for the inaugural Ciprian Foias Prize in Operator Theory by American Mathematical Society (AMS).
- 61. c** The 11th edition of Exercise EKVURIN between India and Maldives will be conducted at Kadhdhoo Island, Maldives.
- 62. b** On the occasion of Asom Divas or Assam Day, the state Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced to confer the most prestigious 'Asom Baibhav' award to the industrialist Ratan Tata.
- 63. d** Himachal Pradesh became the first state in India to achieve 100 per cent vaccination against COVID-19 among all eligible adults.

- 64. b** 5th Indian Ocean Conference began in Abu Dhabi.
- 65. a** Ghaziabad's Nehru World School (NWS) has become the first school in Uttar Pradesh to be integrated into the PASCH network, a cooperative organization of schools around the globe supported by the German Federal Foreign Office.
- 66. a** Polls have opened in The Gambia for the first election since former President Yahya Jammeh left office and fled the country in 2017.
- 67. b** BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra has been appointed as the Chairman of India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC).
- 68. b** Argentina showcased its organised game with great composure to beat six-time champion German side 4-2 and win the title after 16 years in the men's hockey Junior World Cup at the Kalinga Stadium.
- 69. c** The United Nations Volunteers Programme (UNV) coordinates International Volunteer Day on 5 December every year to recognize and promote the tireless work, not just of UN Volunteers, but of volunteers across the globe.
- 70. a** India's Ananya Bansal won the country's first silver medal in shotput in the F-20 category at the Asia Youth Paralympic Games in Manama, Bahrain.
- 71. c** Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Dehradun, Uttarakhand where he inaugurated and lay the foundation stone of multiple projects including the ambitious Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor worth around ₹18,000 crore.
- 72. a** Hyderabad-based startup Skyroot Aerospace has successfully demonstrated the country's first privately developed cryogenic rocket engine named Dhawan-1 after eminent rocket scientist Satish Dhawan.
- 73. b** The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment announced the formation of a three-member committee to review the criteria for Economically Weaker Section (EWS) reservations.
- 74. a** If Cyclone Jawad hits Odisha coast as predicted, it will be the first one to do so to the state in December in India Meteorological Department (IMD)'s nearly 130 years of recorded history.
- 75. c** World Soil Day (WSD) is held annually on 5 December as a means to focus attention on the importance of healthy soil and to advocate for the sustainable management of soil resources.
- 76. a** Russia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have concluded their first joint naval exercise.
- 77. b** Legendary scientist, ethologist, conservationist, and messenger of peace, Jane Goodall has been conferred with the "Legend Award" by Sanctuary Nature Foundation.
- 78. a** Indian shuttler PV Sindhu settled for a silver medal after going down meekly to South Korea's An Seyoung 16-21 12-21 in the summit clash of the BWF World Tour Finals.
- 79. b** Akarsh Shroff of Bengaluru and a student of BITS Pilani was conferred the United Nations V-award for his commitment to the welfare of orphans and underserved children.
- 80. a** In the 2nd Test between India and New Zealand, left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel created history by taking all 10 wickets in an innings and became the third bowler after Jim Laker and Anil Kumble to achieve the feat.
- 81. d** The scheme at present covers 117 languages.
- 82. c** Adama Barrow has comfortably won a second term in The Gambia's presidential election, with thousands of supporters celebrating and opponents disputing the results.
- 83. c** For the first time in the country, two cities in Kerala are rising to the status of global learning cities. The Central Government approved the recommendation of the State Government and recommended Thrissur and Nilambur for the Global Study City Plan.
- 84. c** Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Dr Virendra Kumar launched Scheme for Residential Education for Students in High Schools in Targeted Areas (SRESHTA) for socio-economic upliftment and overall development of Scheduled Castes students.

- 85. b** Sanjiv Mehta, Chairman and Managing Director of Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) will be appointed as Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) President.
- 86. d** India and Russia vowed to deepen collaboration in the space sector, including in the human spaceflight programme, and signed an agreement for cooperation in the building as well as operation of launch vehicles.
- 87. a** Lewis Hamilton beat Max Verstappen in a chaotic and controversial Saudi Arabian Grand Prix to set up a winner-takes-all title finale in Abu Dhabi next weekend.
- 88. b** The occasion put Virat Kohli in another illustrious list of records in international cricket as the India skipper became the first cricketer ever to register 50 wins or more in each of the three formats of the game.
- 89. b** Raising the bar higher and shattering all records, India's largest music label and movie studio, T-Series has crossed the milestone of 200 Million subscribers on YouTube, the first ever channel across the world to do so.
- 90. c** Gattipally Shivpal, who hails from Hyderabad, has become the first dwarf in the country to obtain a driver's license. The 42-year-old man with a height of about three feet has beaten all odds and has become the first to complete his degree as a handicapped in his district Karimnagar. Shivpal finished his degree in 2004.
- 91. c** Shivalik Small Finance Bank (SSFB) announced a partnership with fintech firm Indiagold to launch a loan product against digital gold. Digital gold is an affordable medium to own and save with gold without the trouble of physically handling and storing the asset.
- 92. c** India successfully flight tested the indigenously developed new Vertical Launch Short Range Surface-to-Air Missile (VLSRSAM) from the coast off Balasore, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) official.
- 93. a** Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and Indian Ordnance Factories were among the top 100 global arms-producing and military services companies in 2020, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) said.
- 94. a** Chennai's Sabari J became the inaugural winner of the World Boxing Council's (WBC) India welterweight title, defeating the more experienced Akashdeep Singh of Chandigarh in an eight-round bout.
- 95. a** In Germany, Social Democratic Party of Germany leader Olaf Scholz is nominated as the country's next Chancellor by Parliament bringing the curtain down on Angela Merkel's 16-year reign.
- 96. a** Pranjala Yadlapalli clinched the KSLTA ITF World Tour Championships women's singles title beating Sowjanya Bhaviseti, in Bengaluru.
- 97. c** The Swachh Bharat Mission Phase 2 is launched to further strengthen the efforts for a clean India. The report, titled "Waste-Wise Cities: Best Practices in Municipal Solid Waste Management", documents best practices from 28 cities in 15 states of India.
- 98. b** International Civil Aviation Day 7 December.
- 99. c** Former Chief Election Commissioner of India Sunil Arora joined the Board of Advisors for International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA).
- 100. c** Indian-origin physician Anil Menon, a lieutenant colonel at the US Air Force, has been selected by NASA along with nine others to be astronauts for future missions, the American space agency has announced.
- 101. c** Education Ministry has launched a mobile app called Bhasha Sangam in order to help people acquire basic conversation ability in languages other than one's mother tongue to at least 75 lakh people.
- 102. c** A Curtain Raiser Event for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief exercise, PANEX-21, for the member nations of BIMSTEC countries, was held at Kothari Auditorium DRDO Bhawan, New Delhi.
- 103. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation three mega projects, including an AIIMS and a major fertiliser plant, in Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's home turf Gorakhpur.

- 104. d** The researchers at the Indian Institute of Science have found out that hydrogen sulphide gas can suppress the Human Immunodeficiency Virus or HIV virus.
- 105. d** National Commission for Women, NCW launched a pan-India capacity building programme - She is a Changemaker, for women in Politics.
- 106. a** Delhi's INA fruit and vegetable market becomes the first market to be certified as the 'clean and fresh fruit and vegetable market' in the national capital by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
- 107. a** Renowned Konkani writer Damodar Mauzo has been conferred with 57th Jnanpith Award for the year 2022.
- 108. a** Sanket Mahadev Sargar won the gold medal in the Men's 55 kg snatch category at the ongoing Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships 2021 in Tashkent.
- 109. a** Southern Railway becomes Indian Railways' first zone to get the first Registered service provider under the newly launched 'Bharat Gaurav Trains' Scheme.
- 110. d** Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat has died in the air crash. General Bipin Rawat, his wife Madhulika Rawat and 11 other persons on board have died in the unfortunate accident.
- 111. b** Earlier this year, on March 22, an agreement was signed between the Centre and two states – Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh – to implement the Ken-Betwa river linking project, which is the first major centrally-driven river interlinking project in the country.
- 112. c** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman virtually participated in the G20 International Seminar hosted in Bali by the G20 Presidency of Indonesia.
- 113. d** For the third time in a row, Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman made it Forbes' 100 most powerful women in the world. This year, she is ranked at number 37, up from last year when she was placed at 41.
- 114. c** India has risen as the fourth most powerful country in Asia, according to a report by Lowy Institute Asia Power Index 2021. It has been ranked fourth among the 26 countries and territories in Indo-Pacific for comprehensive power.
- 115. b** A new report by Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has said China is the world's biggest captor of journalists with at least 127 reporters currently detained.
- 116. b** Government think tank NITI Aayog announced the launch of 'e-Sawaari India Electric Bus Coalition' in partnership with Convergence Energy Service Ltd (CESL) and World Resources Institute, India (WRI India), with support from Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative (TUMI).
- 117. b** YES Bank announced that it partnered with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to launch a new RuPay co-branded credit cards for customers on the indigenously developed payment platform.
- 118. b** Scientists have unearthed Asia's first fossil record of mulberry from the Gurha lignite mines near Bikaner in western Rajasthan.
- 119. c** 9 December 2021 marks the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime.
- 120. a** Noted Hindi writer Asgar Wajahat will be awarded the 31st Vyas Samman for his play Mahabali, which was published in 2019.
- 121. c** Madhya Pradesh government implemented Police Commissionerate system in Bhopal and Indore.
- 122. a** The Emirate of Dubai has achieved its objectives of the Dubai Paperless Strategy, launched in 2018, to establish itself as a leading digital capital and become the world's first paperless government.
- 123. b** India's ranking in IMD competitive ranking slipped from 59 in 2019 to 62 in 2020. India's performances in various factors are 63 in Investment and Development, 55 in Appeal, 25 in Readiness and 62 is India's overall performance.

- 124. c** India stands out as a “poor and very unequal country, with an affluent elite”, where the top 10 per cent holds 57 per cent of the total national income.
- 125. a** Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways and Ayush Shri Sarbananda Sonowal attended the India International Science Festival (IISF) 2021 in Panaji, Goa.
- 126. b** Sonali Garg has won a prestigious postdoctoral fellowship on biodiversity to Harvard University.
- 127. d** Professor Neena Gupta, a mathematician at the Indian Statistical Institute in Kolkata, has been awarded the 2021 DST-ICTP-IMU Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians from developing countries for her outstanding work in affine algebraic geometry and commutative algebra.
- 128. b** The Pinaka-ER Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher System was successfully tested at Pokharan range.
- 129. b** India’s teenage weightlifting sensation Jeremy Lalrinnunga won the gold medal in the men’s 67 kg category at the Commonwealth Championships, in Tashkent.
- 130. c** The International Mountain Day is celebrated on 11th of December every year.
- 131. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh and inaugurated the Saryu Nahar National Project.
- 132. c** One of the largest planets ever detected orbits at an enormous distance around two stars with a combined mass up to 10 times greater than our sun, an extreme celestial family that shatters assumptions about the type of places where planets can exist.
- 133. b** Paytm Payments Bank has gained central bank approval to function as a scheduled payments bank helping it to expand its financial services operations.
- 134. c** Indian-origin Gautam Raghavan has been elevated to Head of the White House personnel office.
- 135. b** Olaf Scholz has been sworn in as Germany’s new chancellor, bringing to an end Angela Merkel’s historic 16 years as leader.
- 136. b** Shaktikanta Das started his extended three-year tenure as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor.
- 137. c** The Assembly also designated 9 December as International Anti-Corruption Day, to raise awareness of corruption and of the role of the Convention in combating and preventing it.
- 138. a** UN General Assembly has granted Observer Status to International Solar Alliance.
- 139. d** Carlsen retained his status as undisputed king of world chess. It is his fifth successive world title (starting in Chennai in November 2013). Besides, he is world No. 1 in all formats including rapid and blitz.
- 140. c** The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Charter Day is observed every year on 8th December.
- 141. a** India’s efforts to improve its wetlands and preserve its ecology is bearing fruits as India is now a land of 47 Ramsar sites. The latest on the list is Uttar Pradesh’s Haiderpur wetland. It has been added to the list of Indian wetlands of international importance.
- 142. d** UNSC Secretary-General Antonio Guterres announced the appointment of Catherine Russell, an assistant to U.S. President Joe Biden, as the next head of the U.N. children’s agency UNICEF.
- 143. d** The Reserve Bank of India has approved the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) to raise its stake in IndusInd Bank by up to 9.99 per cent.
- 144. c** The LEI is a 20-digit number used to uniquely identify parties to financial transactions globally to improve the quality and accuracy of financial data systems.
- 145. a** Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati has established advanced micro electronics and nano energy facilities at its Centre for Nanotechnology which is the first-of-its-kind in the Northeast.

- 146. c** Clearing the air on the launch year of India's much-delayed maiden human spaceflight mission to space, Union space minister Jitendra Singh said the final crewed Gaganyaan mission will be launched in 2023.
- 147. c** "Baahubali" star Prabhas Raju has been named the number one South Asian celebrity in the world for 2021 by UK-based Eastern Eye weekly newspaper.
- 148. a** Red Bull's Max Verstappen seals his maiden F1 title by beating title rival Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes in a last-lap thriller.
- 149. a** Ahmedabad-based Balkrishna Doshi will receive the Royal Gold Medal 2022 by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), the world's highest honour for architecture.
- 150. b** The Day is celebrated on 10th December every year since 1950 in commemoration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, by the United Nations in 1948.
- 151. d** India's Harnaaz Sandhu has been crowned Miss Universe 2021, two decades after Lara Dutta won the title in 2000.
- 152. c** Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Dr. Virendra Kumar launched a National Helpline Against Atrocities in New Delhi. The Helpline is now available round the clock on toll-free number 14566 across the country.
- 153. c** The Geographical Indications Registry (GIR) under the Central ministry of commerce has accepted the plea to rename Bihar Makhana as Mithila Makhana and also suggested further amendments in the brand logo to better reflect its origins apart from identifying and protecting the product's Geographical Indications (GI) rights.
- 154. a** Chairperson, Lokpal of India, Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose inaugurated a digital Platform for Management of Complaints called 'LokpalOnline' that can be accessed by all citizens of the country and complaints can be filed from anywhere, anytime at <http://lokpalonline.gov.in>.
- 155. c** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said, the Maa Umiya Dham Development Project in Gujarat is a perfect example of the notion of 'Sabka Prayas' as this auspicious project will be fulfilled with the efforts of all.
- 156. a** Time magazine named Tesla founder and space entrepreneur Elon Musk as its person of the year, capping a roller-coaster 2021 for the technology magnate.
- 157. b** New Caledonia rejects independence from France in third referendum.
- 158. a** A federal panel has approved renaming a Colorado peak after a Cheyenne woman who facilitated relations between white settlers and Native American tribes in the early 19th century, part of a broader campaign to replace derogatory place names across the United States.
- 159. a** Pune has ranked first in export of engineering goods in a new listing issued by the Government of India.
- 160. b** Ajay Singh clinched India's third gold of the Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships by winning the men's 81 kg category.
- 161. b** India has been re-elected to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council after elections were held at its Assembly in London for the 2022-23 biennium.
- 162. a** 'Shri Ramayana Yatra' theme based pilgrimage tour by Dekho Apna Desh Deluxe AC Tourist train become the first vegetarian friendly train.
- 163. b** The Sports Journalists' Federation of India (SJFI) decided to confer the prestigious 'SJFI Medal' to legendary cricketer Sunil Gavaskar.
- 164. c** The three Western allies would develop the cable to provide faster internet to Nauru, Kiribati and the Federated States of Micronesia.
- 165. d** The Maharashtra government has announced a new syllabus for classes 1-8 to teach the students about climate change and make them conscious about tackling the issues emanating from it.

- 166. b** A 15-year-old student, Avani Prashanth has been selected for the ‘Global Child Prodigy Award 2022’ for excellence in golf.
- 167. b** Two of ITC’s signature hotels in South India have been bestowed with a rare distinction. The hospitality group’s flagship ITC Grand Chola in Chennai, and ITC Windsor in Bengaluru, have been certified with the US Green Building Council (USGBC)’s LEED Zero Carbon Certification.
- 168. a** Simone Biles was named Time’s 2021 Athlete of the Year.
- 169. c** National Energy Conservation Day is observed on December 14, every year.
- 170. b** Established to protect the endangered flagship species Musk Deer and its habitat, the picturesque Askot Wildlife Sanctuary in Uttarakhand’s Pithoragarh has been finally declared as an Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ).
- 171. a** Durga Puja in Kolkata has just been inscribed on the Intangible Heritage list by UNESCO.
- 172. b** Union Cabinet has approved implementation of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana for 2021-26. The scheme will benefit about 22 lakh farmers, including 2.5 lakh Schedule Caste and two lakh Schedule Tribe farmers.
- 173. a** Giving a boost to technological innovation, Chitkara University, Himachal Pradesh, organised “HACKDAY 2021” under its Entrepreneurship Cell (E-Cell) ‘JAZBA’, which has been formed under the aegis of Chitkara University Centre for Entrepreneurship Education & Development (CEED).
- 174. c** Bank of Baroda (BOB) has joined hands with National Payments Corporations of India (NPCI) to launch bob World Wave, a wearable line of products for payments, integrated with a complete health ecosystem.
- 175. c** India’s first Green Hydrogen Microgrid Projects to be set up at Simhadri near Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh.
- 176. c** Russia blocked a United Nations Security Council draft resolution, under negotiation for many months that for the first time would have defined climate change as a threat to peace.
- 177. c** Researchers at IIT Delhi’s Kusuma School of Biological Sciences have developed an RT-PCR based assay for the specific detection of the Omicron (B.1.1.529.1) variant of SARS-CoV-2.
- 178. b** Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Thakur launched first edition of Khelo India Women’s Hockey League U-21 at Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium in New Delhi.
- 179. c** In a major boost to the Jharkhand soccer fraternity, Jamshedpur FC became the first Indian football club to receive a membership of Global Football Alliance (GFA).
- 180. b** Author Shashi Tharoor shared details of his inspiration for writing “The Battle of Belonging” and made a passionate plea to read this deeply-researched work.
- 181. c** The government of India has decided to raise the legal age of marriage for women from 18 to 21 years, bringing it at par with that of men.
- 182. d** Launching the Sports Action toward Harnessing Aspiration of Youth (SAHAY) scheme, Chief Minister Hemant Soren said the state has been “portrayed in a poor light by some”, who are not aware of Jharkhand’s rich tribal culture.
- 183. b** The Centre has set up the Price Stabilization Fund to tackle price volatility of agro commodities such as onion, potato, and pulses to protect the interests of consumers.
- 184. d** World’s Most Admired Men 2021 are:
1. Barack Obama
 2. Bill Gates
 3. Xi Jinping
 4. Cristiano Ronaldo
 5. Jackie Chan

- 185. a** The researchers show that there is no trace of dark matter in the galaxy AGC 114905, located about 250 million light-years away.
- 186. d** In India, Vijay Diwas (also called Victory Day) is celebrated every year on December 16.
- 187. b** For the first time in history, a spacecraft has touched the corona of the Sun – an extreme environment that’s roughly 2 million degrees Fahrenheit – in a milestone that marks one major step for the spacefaring organisation and one giant leap for mankind and solar science.
- 188. b** The leading digital payment solution provider, Paytm has launched its first AI-powered educational platform called Paytm Wealth Academy.
- 189. a** Britain’s seven-times Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton received a knighthood for services to motorsport, days after losing out on what would have been a record eighth title in the last lap of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.
- 190. a** MG Motor India announced its foray into the non-fungible token (NFT), making it the first carmaker in the country to launch a collection of NFTs.
- 191. c** West Bengal and Kerala were toppers in the large and small states categories respectively, in the ‘Index on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy,’ released.
- 192. a** The United Nations cultural agency (UNESCO) has added Joumou Soup – Haiti’s national symbol of freedom from slavery – to its intangible heritage list, saying the soup is “so much more than just a dish”.
- 193. b** Home First Finance Company India announced that it has entered into a strategic co-lending partnership with Union Bank of India for providing home loans to customers at competitive interest rates.
- 194. a** PM Modi conferred with the highest civilian decoration of Bhutan, Ngadag Pel gi Khorlo.
- 195. a** US’ Victor Vescovo Becomes First Person To Touch All Four World’s Deepest Ocean Trenches.
- 196. c** For the second year in a row, IIT Roorkee has been selected by the prestigious Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) for the Industrial Innovation Awards.
- 197. c** India’s Hansini Mathan Rajan defeated Syria’s Hend Zaza, the youngest athlete of this year’s Tokyo Olympics, to win the girls singles event at the 2021 ITTF Hopes and Challenge table tennis tournament in Amman.
- 198. c** Aditya Birla Group’s chairman, Kumar Mangalam Birla received the Global Entrepreneur of the Year Award- Business Transformation from The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) based out of Silicon Valley.
- 199. c** UN Arabic Language Day is observed annually on December 18.
- 200. a** Environmentalist Dr Anil Prakash Joshi, who was conferred upon the Padma Bhushan this year, has been awarded the Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice 2021.
- 201. b** On the lines of Chhattisgarh and Delhi, preparations are underway to implement the ‘happiness curriculum’ in primary schools of Uttar Pradesh under a pilot project to make the students more sensitive towards nature, society and the country.
- 202. b** North India’s first Centre of Entrepreneurship in Medi Electronics and Health Informatics to start operations in Lucknow.
- 203. c** Thanjavur now has a new site in town, India’s first food museum. Established by the Food Corporation of India, this museum gives visitors a tour of agriculture, cuisines and food distribution systems in India.
- 204. d** The Union Cabinet approved a ₹76,000 crore scheme to boost semiconductor and display manufacturing in the country, taking the total amount of incentives announced for the electronics sector to ₹2.30 lakh crore.
- 205. c** National Cadet Corps, NCC, and National Highways Authority of India, NHAI has signed a Memorandum of Understanding to reuse plastic wastes collected by NCC Cadets during Puneet Sagar Abhiyan and other Swachhta activities.

- 206. c** Apple is about to become the world's first \$3 trillion company.
- 207. c** Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully tested the new generation nuclear-capable ballistic missile 'Agni P' from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.
- 208. d** India will host Women's Under-18 and Under-19 SAFF championships next year.
- 209. c** On 18 December 1990, the General Assembly adopted a resolution on the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.
- 210. b** Written by author Shantanu Gupta, "The Monk Who Transformed Uttar Pradesh: How Yogi Adityanath Changed UP Waala Bhaiya' abuse to a Badge of Honour", is published by Garuda Prakashan.
- 211. b** India's first International Arbitration and Mediation Centre (IAMC) was jointly inaugurated by Chief Justice of India, N.V. Ramana, and Telangana Chief Minister, K. Chandrasekhar Rao.
- 212. c** Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the longest expressway of Uttar Pradesh Ganga Expressway in Shahjahanpur district. The 594 Km long six-lane Expressway will be built at a cost of over Rs 36,200 crore. Starting near the Bijauli village in Meerut, the Expressway will extend till near the Judapur Dandu village in Prayagraj.
- 213. b** The Jharkhand government launched the Safe and Responsible Migration Initiative (SRMI) to enable systemic registration of migrant workers for monitoring and analysis in the source as well as the destination districts.
- 214. b** The Tamil Nadu government announced 'Tamil Thaa Vaazhthu,' an invocation sung in praise of Mother Tamil, as the state anthem and directed that all present during its rendition should remain standing.
- 215. c** The latest Bloomberg Index also shows that US-South African business magnate Elon Musk remains the world's wealthiest person, followed by Jeff Bezos, Bernard Arnault, Bill Gates and Larry Page, in that order. Mark Zuckerberg (6), Sergey Brin (7), Steve Balmer (8), Larry Ellison (9) and Warren Buffett round off the top 10.
- 216. c** December 18 was declared as the Minorities Rights Day back in 1992 by the United Nations.
- 217. d** Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras have developed a class of fast and efficient "motion planning" algorithms which can think like human beings and enable autonomous aerial, ground or surface vehicles to navigate obstacle-cluttered environments.
- 218. b** India will host Women's Under-18 and Under-19 SAFF championships next year.
- 219. a** In Badminton, Kidambi Srikanth bagged a historic silver medal after losing to Loh Kean Yew of Singapore 15-21, 20-22 in the Men's singles final of BWF World Championships at Huelva in Spain.
- 220. b** Former Supreme Court judge Justice Girish Thakorlal Nanavati, who investigated the 1984 anti-Sikh and the 2002 Godhra riots, passed away.
- 221. b** Chileans elected Gabriel Boric as their next president, entrusting the young leftist lawmaker with helping to shape the future of a nation that has been roiled by protests and is now drafting a new constitution.
- 222. a** After the abrogation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status in 2019, the government set up the Delimitation Commission headed by retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai.
- 223. d** The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) sets up a committee for creating a framework for transfer of stressed loans from domestic lenders to financial institutions in IFSC. Former executive director of RBI G Padmanabhan would be chairing the committee.
- 224. d** India ranks 142 and Pakistan 145 while North Korea and Eritrea are ranked 179 and 180.
- 225. b** The Centre introduced the Election Laws (Amendment Bill) 2021 to link voter identity and Aadhaar cards, despite objections by the Opposition parties over the move.

- 226. a** The government has launched a campaign namely Kalam Program for Intellectual Property Literacy and Awareness Campaign (KAPILA) to increase awareness regarding protection and exploitation of Intellectual Property (IP) and also to provide funding support in order to promote filing of the Intellectual Property (IP) in Higher Education Institutions.
- 227. b** Swashbuckling India wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant has been appointed the brand ambassador of Uttarakhand with an aim to promote sports and create mental health awareness among the state's youth.
- 228. c** After 24 hours of political turmoil, Austria's ruling People's Party has chosen Interior Minister Karl Nehammer to take over as leader of both party and country.
- 229. d** India's two-time Olympic medalist shuttler PV Sindhu was appointed as a member of the Badminton World Federation's (BWF) Athletes' Commission.
- 230. b** The General Assembly, on 22 December 2005, by resolution identified solidarity as one of the fundamental and universal values that should underlie relations between peoples in the twenty-first century, and in that regard decided to proclaim 20 December of each year International Human Solidarity Day.
- 231. a** NITI Aayog has entered into an agreement with United Nations World Food Program (WFP) to address issues related to inclusion of millets in government programmes.
- 232. b** NASA and ISRO are jointly developing a space-borne synthetic aperture radar (NISAR), to be launched in January 2023.
- 233. c** China Huaneng Group Co.'s 200-megawatt unit 1 reactor at Shidao Bay is now feeding power to the grid in Shandong province.
- 234. c** Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh witnessed a Multi-Agency Exercise (MAE) and inaugurated an equipment display on the second day of PANEX-21, a Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise for BIMSTEC member nations, organised at College of Military Engineering in Pune, Maharashtra.
- 235. c** The Indian government declared 22 December to be National Mathematics Day.
- 236. b** Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) rolled out their first AgriTech Challenge cohort for its ambitious innovative Agri-tech program that aims to help smallholder farmers across Asia and Africa to address their challenges in the aftermath of the pandemic.
- 237. b** The planned World Economic Forum in the Swiss mountain resort of Davos has been called off due to surging cases of the Omicron variant of Covid-19, citing communication from organisers to delegates.
- 238. c** Ravinder Bhakar, CEO of Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has assumed charge of National Film Development Corporation (NFDC), Films Division, and Children Films Society of India (CFSI).
- 239. b** U.S. President Joe Biden announced intent to appoint four Indian Americans Ajay Jain Bhutoria, Sonal Shah, Kamal Kalsi and Smita Shah as members of his Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders.
- 240. a** Ace cueist Pankaj Advani defended his national billiards title his 11th in the tournament after he defeated his PSPB teammate Dhruv Sitwala.
- 241. d** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated T-Setu, the State's longest bridge over Mahanadi in Cuttack district.
- 242. a** Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar has released the book titled Spices Statistics at a Glance 2021'.
- 243. a** Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati have developed hybrid pervoskite solar or photovoltaic devices to produce electricity from sunlight, which are highly efficient, cost effective, easy to manufacture and easily recyclable.
- 244. d** The first tea museum in the northeast region will come up in the "Tea City of India", Dibrugarh, and will be officially opened to public in early 2023.

- 245. b** The Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of ‘Banas Dairy Sankul’ at Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority Food Park at Karkhiyaon in Varanasi.
- 246. c** In 2001, the government decided to recognise Choudhary Charan Singh’s contribution to the agriculture sector and welfare of farmers by celebrating his birth anniversary as Kisan Diwas. Since then, December 23 has been observed as National Farmers’ Day.
- 247. c** Britain and Norway have signed their first post-Brexit fishing deal, allowing each country access to the other’s waters and reciprocal quotas, the government in Oslo announced.
- 248. c** Bank of Baroda announced that it has won the number one position in overall digital transactions among large banks for FY20-21.
- 249. a** Vodafone announced that it is auctioning the world’s first SMS as a non-fungible token (NFT).
- 250. c** Bangladesh has lifted SAFF U-19 Women’s Championship defeating India by a solitary goal in Dhaka.
- 251. c** Indian Army launched a contemporary messaging application named ASIGMA. ASIGMA stands for Army Secure Indigenous Messaging Application.
- 252. b** India successfully test fired short-range, surface to surface-guided ballistic missile ‘Pralay’ off the Odisha coast.
- 253. d** Atal Innovation Mission, Niti Aayog launched the first of its kind Vernacular Innovation Program which enables innovators and entrepreneurs to have access to the innovative ecosystem in 22 mother tongue languages.
- 254. a** The logo of the new budget carrier is A, and the brand slogan of the company is ‘it’s your sky’.
- 255. a** A rabbit mascot named Neeraj, in honour of Neeraj Chopra, the first Indian athlete to win an Olympic gold medal, will be the symbol for the first ever ‘Kerala Olympic Games’, slated to be held in February 2022.
- 256. d** The Government notified the semiconductor policy which was cleared by the Cabinet. According to the gazette notification, the government will provide up to 50% of Project cost for two semiconductor and two display fabs in the country.
- 257. d** Jhulan Goswami sets to storm the exciting new world of non-fungible token (NFT) with the Dubai based CricFlix, in association with RevSportz and Fanatic Sports, launching its first-ever cricket non-fungible token (NFT) auction in Dubai.
- 258. d** National Consumer Rights Day is observed on 24 December annually with a particular theme across the country.
- 259. b** Indian American Shalina D Kumar has become the first person of South Asian descent to be selected as a federal judge in Michigan.
- 260. c** Divya Hegde from Udupi, coastal Karnataka, has won the UN Women’s Award for Leadership Commitment at the 2021 Regional Asia-Pacific Women’s Empowerment Principles Awards ceremony.
- 261. d** The Maharashtra Assembly unanimously cleared the Shakti Criminal Laws (Maharashtra Amendment) Bill, 2020 on crimes against women and children.
- 262. c** India’s first 5G technology trials for rural broadband began at Ajol village, with a base transceiver station (BTS) installed 17 km away at Unava town in Gandhinagar district.
- 263. b** State-run Oil India Ltd has become the latest entity to join the green hydrogen rush by initiating the process of setting up a 100 kw green hydrogen plant at its pumping station No. 3 in Jorhat district of Assam.
- 264. b** The Jharkhand Assembly gave its nod to Pandit Raghunath Murmu Tribal University Bill 2021, paving the way for the state’s first tribal university.
- 265. a** Prime Minister Naftali Bennett’s cabinet voted in favour of the plan that aims to build 7,300 settler homes in the region over a five-year period, during a meeting held at the Mevo Hama community in the Golan.

- 266. a** RBL Bank MD and CEO Vishwavir Ahuja steps down, Rajeev Ahuja takes over.
- 267. a** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh laid the foundation stone for a Defence Technology & Test Centre (DTTC) and a BrahMos manufacturing centre to be established by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in Lucknow.
- 268. c** Delhi will publish its first 'State of Environment Report' next year that will have data on all key areas, including sewage, water quality, waste collection and segregation etc., put together succinctly.
- 269. a** Ace Indian skier Aanchal Thakur has bagged Bronze medal at the FIS Alpine Skiing Competition in Montenegro.
- 270. d** Veteran Greek politician Karolos Papoulias, who served as president at the height of the economic crisis of the 2010s, died at the age of 92.
- 271. b** The CoE on Water Reuse is the first of its kind to be established in the country through a collaboration between NMCG and TERI.
- 272. a** Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra said the polling time will be enhanced by an hour for assembly elections in Uttarakhand considering the state's difficult terrain.
- 273. b** Urvashi Rautela Becomes First Indian To Be Awarded 'Symbol Of The Armour' By Israel's Army.
- 274. c** The world's largest and most powerful space telescope rocketed away on a high-stakes quest to behold light from the first stars and galaxies and scour the universe for hints of life. NASA's James Webb Space Telescope soared from French Guiana on South America's northeastern coast, riding a European Ariane rocket into the sky.
- 275. b** The west African nation of Benin has registered its first protected geographical indication at the African Intellectual Property Organisation. The honour goes to the sugarloaf pineapple from the Allada Plateau, which has juicy and sweet white flesh, and the distinction of remaining green when fully ripe.
- 276. a** INS Khukri, the first of the indigenously built missile corvettes, was decommissioned "after 32 years of glorious service".
- 277. c** DRDO has successfully conducted the flight test of Indigenously developed High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) 'Abhyas' from Integrated Test Range at Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.
- 278. b** Uttar Pradesh rode on Arun Sahani's brace to script a 3-1 win over Chandigarh in the final of the 11th Hockey India junior National men's championship.
- 279. c** South African anti-apartheid icon Archbishop Desmond Tutu, described as the country's moral compass, died aged 90, sparking an outpouring of tributes from the outspoken Nobel Peace Prize winner.
- 280. c** Kerala has delivered India's first great superhero movie. With Basil Joseph's new Malayalam film Minnal Murali, streaming on Netflix, India has finally cracked the superhero formula.'
- 281. b** The ministry of home affairs set up a high-level committee, headed by Vivek Joshi, a secretary-rank officer, to look into the possibility of withdrawing the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act from Nagaland in the wake of rising tension in the state over the killing of 14 civilians.
- 282. a** Nitin Gadkari launched the first Intelligent Transport System on Eastern Peripheral Expressway at Dasna, Ghaziabad.
- 283. d** Gujarat has topped the composite ranking in the Good Governance Index (GGI), followed by Maharashtra and Goa while Uttar Pradesh showed an incremental growth of 8.9 per cent in the indicators launched by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on the occasion of the Good Governance Day.
- 284. b** Minister of Agriculture, Narendra Singh Tomar has said that, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, agriculture is being given priority and 1 lakh 62 thousand crore rupees have been provided to 11.5 crore farmers in the country under PM Kisan Yojana. He inaugurated the four-day agriculture exhibition 'Agrovision', in Nagpur, Maharashtra.
- 285. b** Narandran 'Jody' Kollapen, who is of Indian origin, has been appointed to South Africa's highest judicial bench, the Constitutional Court.

- 286. b** Ecuador has become the first country to make coronavirus vaccines obligatory for children. Everyone from the age of five is eligible to be vaccinated.
- 287. c** China will become the world's top economy in dollar terms in 2030, two years later than forecast in last year's World Economic League Table report.
- 288. c** Himachal Pradesh batters played out of their skins to beat Tamil Nadu in the final of Vijay Hazare Trophy at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium.
- 289. a** In a revelation that could redefine certain aspects of anatomical studies as we know it, scientists have now discovered humans have a new layer of muscles behind the cheeks that stabilise the lower jaw.
- 290. d** National Consumer Day is observed on 24 December annually to highlight the importance of the consumer movement and spread awareness about the rights and responsibilities of every consumer.
- 291. b** Kerala has again emerged as the top performer in terms of overall health performance among larger States, while Uttar Pradesh is the worst, according to the fourth Health Index launched by NITI Aayog.
- 292. a** China expert and former Indian envoy to Beijing Vikram Misri was appointed deputy national security adviser in the national security council secretariat. Misri, a 1989 batch IFS officer, will come in place of Pankaj Saran who demits office on December 31, 2021.
- 293. b** Somalia's President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed said he had suspended the prime minister's powers, escalating a destabilising dispute.
- 294. a** Over the last three years since Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih was elected to office, an 'India Out' [#IndiaOut] campaign has cropped up every now and then within the Indian Ocean island nation, mostly on social media.
- 295. d** The cities which are set to get the 5G telecom services in 2022 include Gurugram, Bangalore, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chandigarh, Delhi, Jamnagar, Ahmadabad, Chennai, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Pune, and Gandhinagar.
- 296. c** IndusInd Bank has joined hands with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) for offering real-time cross-border remittances to India using UPI IDs for its Money Transfer Operator (MTO) partners.
- 297. b** The National Energy Conservation Day is observed on December 14th, every year by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE).
- 298. a** In a scintillating match, Korea defeated Japan to lift the trophy in the Hero Asian Champions trophy hockey in Dhaka.
- 299. c** China has been making rapid advancements in the technology field. And now, Chinese scientists have claimed that they have developed a machine that can charge people with crime using artificial intelligence. This is the world's first such machine.
- 300. c** Jahnvi Dangeti, a second-year engineering student from Palakollu of West Godavari, has created history by being the only Indian to undergo International Air and Space Program (IASP) at Nasa Launch Operations' Kennedy Space Centre in Alabama, US.
- 301. d** The Andhra Pradesh government has credited farmer welfare schemes for the state's No. 1 rank in agriculture and allied sectors in the Good Governance Index 2021 by recording 11.3% growth over the last two years.
- 302. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Kanpur and inaugurate the completed section of Kanpur Metro Rail Project. During the programme, the Prime Minister will also inaugurate the Bina-Panki Multiproduct Pipeline Project.
- 303. c** Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation of the Rs 6,700-crore Renukaji Dam project from Himachal Pradesh's Mandi town.
- 304. c** India will chair the Counter-Terrorism Committee of UNSC in January 2022 after 10 years.
- 305. b** Delhi govt's colour-coded action plan to fight Covid-19.
- 306. a** Mumbai-based JSW Group has become the first major Indian multinational conglomerate to roll out an electric vehicle (EV) policy for its employees.

- 307. b** The Inmarsat-6 F1 satellite launched atop a Mitsubishi Heavy Industries H-2A rocket from Japan's Tanegashima Space Center.
- 308. b** Surat's noted industrialist Viral Desai, popularly known as Greenman for his love for the environment, has been awarded the prestigious Global Environment and Climate Action Citizen Award in Dubai.
- 309. a** In Madhya Pradesh, World Sangeet Tansen festival is held. The festival was organised till December 30th in Gwalior. This is the 97th edition of the festival.
- 310. c** Indian Police Services (IPS) officer Violet Baruah became the first-ever woman to get promoted to the rank of Inspector General in Assam Police.
- 311. d** The top rank has been bagged by IIT Madras followed by IIT Bombay, IIT Delhi, IIT Kanpur and IIT Roorkee.
- 312. a** Davangere to get India's first mobile haemophilia service unit.
- 313. c** The Army, with support from the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) has recently established the Quantum Lab at Military College of Telecommunication Engineering, Mhow in Madhya Pradesh to spearhead research and training in this key developing field.
- 314. d** The world's first dual-mode vehicle, equally at home on road and rail, is set to make its public debut in the town of Kaiyo in Japan's Tokushima prefecture.
- 315. a** IndusInd Bank has announced the launch of 'green fixed deposits', whereby the deposit proceeds will be used to finance projects and firms supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- 316. b** Corporate houses, which are not allowed to own a bank, can now pick up 15 per cent stake in commercial banks through their non-banking financial companies (NBFCs).
- 317. b** India has welcomed Egypt as the fourth new member of BRICS New Development Bank. Bangladesh, UAE, and Uruguay joined in September this year.
- 318. c** Tamil Nadu becomes first state to get own genome sequencing lab.
- 319. b** Ambala to get north India's first National Centre for Disease Control branch.
- 320. d** Mohammed Shami has established himself among the greats of Indian cricket by becoming only the fifth Indian pacer to take 200 Test wickets.
- 321. a** Uttar Pradesh will soon be a data centre hub a facility that centralizes an organization's shared IT operations and equipment to store, process and disseminate data and applications, as the state's first data centre park is all set to come up in the Greater Noida region.
- 322. c** Senior diplomat Anupam Ray has been appointed as India's next permanent representative to the UN Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.
- 323. c** The revised pecuniary jurisdiction for entertaining consumer complaints shall be upto 50 lakh rupees for District Commissions, more than 50 lakh to two crore rupees for State Commissions and more than two crore rupees for National Commission.
- 324. b** Uttar Pradesh got its first water sports complex at Ramgarh Tal in Gorakhpur.
- 325. b** In January 2022, the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization is scheduled to host the largest international contemporary art event, the World Art Forum (WAF).
- 326. d** State Bank of India will acquire about 10 per cent stake in the India International Clearing Corporation (IICC). IICC is the first international clearing corporation set up at GIFT-IFSC that acts as a central counterparty providing clearing and settlement and risk management services.
- 327. d** India's largest lender, State Bank of India (SBI) is set to embrace new recommended interest rate benchmarks necessitated as the traditional rate gauge London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR) will cease to exist for its day-to-day businesses and in product pricing.

- 328. b** Jammu and Kashmir-based alpine skier Arif Mohammed Khan has qualified for his second event at the 2022 Winter Olympics to be held in Beijing. By doing this, he becomes the first Indian to qualify for two events at the Winter Olympics.
- 329. b** Eminent author Namita Gokhale, TMC MLA Bratya Basu and noted Punjabi writer Khalid Hussain were among the 20 names announced for the Sahitya Akademi Award 2021.
- 330. a** The UAE issued its first civil marriage license for a non-Muslim couple, as the Gulf country seeks to keep its edge over regional competitors.
- 331. a** Chief minister Jai Ram Thakur launched the online RTI portal of the department of administrative reforms. With this Himachal Pradesh became the first state amongst small states and fourth after Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Uttar Pradesh to launch the portal.
- 332. b** NITI Aayog has organizing a day-long national-level workshop on bamboo development in New Delhi.
- 333. b** The Karnataka Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT) released draft Active Mobility Bill which looks into the protection of the rights of pedestrians and cyclists in urban centres all over the state.
- 334. a** Shanghai opens two new lines on longest metro in world.
- 335. c** The Centre has told the Supreme Court that it has decided to accept the recommendation of a three-member panel to retain the current gross annual family income limit for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) of Rs 8 lakh or less.
- 336. a** Establishing itself as a leading digital capital, Dubai has become the world's first paperless government, announced Emirate's Crown Prince Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum.
- 337. c** The latest study has revealed the findings of an earlier study report that the area of glaciers in Nepal decreased by about 24 percent from 1977 to 2010.
- 338. d** The Centre notified monetary jurisdiction of consumer commissions, with the district commissions having jurisdiction to entertain complaints where value of goods or services paid as consideration does not exceed Rs 50 lakh.
- 339. a** Global Family Day, One Day of Peace and Sharing, is celebrated every January 1 in the United States as a global day of peace and sharing.
- 340. a** Loh Kean Yew became Singapore's first badminton world champion with a 21-15 22-20 win over India's Kidambi Srikanth in Huelva, Spain.
- 341. c** Vinay Kumar Tripathi has been appointed as new Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Railway Board.
- 342. c** Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched 100-day Reading Campaign 'Padhe Bharat'.
- 343. b** The U.S. has appointed two women diplomats to senior posts representing Washington in Afghanistan. Rina Amiri has been appointed as a special envoy for Afghan women, girls, and human rights.
- 344. a** According to the members' list of the parliamentary standing committee, led by senior BJP leader Vinay Sahasrabudhe, available on the Rajya Sabha website, TMC MP Sushmita Dev is the only woman among the 31 members.
- 345. a** Germany has shut down three of its six nuclear power plants, as part of the country's phase-out of nuclear energy and turned its focus to renewables.
- 346. b** The Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India has set up 'LIC Digi Zone' at BKC in Mumbai to enhance its digital operations such as sales and services for its customers.
- 347. b** World Braille Day, celebrated since 2019, is observed to raise awareness of the importance of Braille as a means of communication in the full realization of the human rights for blind and partially sighted people.
- 348. a** "Metaverse Dubai is stepping up the game to amaze new travelers on a wider scale by becoming the first global virtual NFT platform based on a real-world map.

- 349. b** Mandatory martial arts training for school and college girls, 50 more person-days for all single- and women-headed households under MGNREGS and 33.3% representation in registered parties are among the provisions in the draft Tamil Nadu State New Policy for Women 2021.
- 350. a** The team used Hubble to observe the exoplanet HAT-P-11b, a Neptune-sized planet 123 light-years from Earth, pass directly across the face of its host star six times in what is known as a “transit.”



Career
Launcher